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THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LAITY

I

The State of the Question

TWO movements closely connected, the Liturgical Movement and Catholic Action, have led in recent years to a revival of interest in what has come to be called the priesthood of the laity. Pope Pius XI pointed to the common priesthood of the faithful as a theological basis for Catholic Action, and both he and his predecessors on several occasions stressed the need for the laity to take a more active part in the liturgy.¹ With this encouragement writers have set to work and the result has been a spate of books and articles dealing with the doctrine patristically, liturgically, pastorally and—to a limited extent—also theologically, with a view to making more widely known and understood a point of Catholic teaching which for centuries had been allowed to lapse into oblivion.

Not all this zeal, it must be said, has kept perfect pace with discretion; and in the extravagances which mar the work of some of its more recent exponents we are perhaps able to see one reason why the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity was suffered to remain so long relegated to the background of Catholic thought. Its formulation—the Priesthood of the Laity—suggests a paradox. Is not a layman so called precisely because he is not a priest, and a priest so called precisely because he is not a layman? Indeed it seems almost inevitable that any attempt to throw light upon the doctrine that every layman is a priest must tend at the same time to obscure those prerogatives which set the ordained priest in a category apart. It was perhaps this danger which caused a doctrine well known to the early Fathers to receive such scant attention from the great theologians of the Middle Ages. Did they foresee that the Reformers would one day arise and say that “all Christians indiscriminately are priests of the New Testament”?²

It is far from our intention to suggest that any of our authors even approximate to such a conclusion as this. The immeasurable difference between the ordained priest and the Catholic layman is ever before their eyes and in their words is constantly affirmed. Yet in the process of showing how all the faithful are priests the said difference grows gradually less. The tendency is natural. In speaking to the deaf we raise our voices; and when we call attention to a thing neglected we are inclined to overstress its importance. And so it has come to pass that some modern writers on the priesthood of the laity seem to grant so much of the priestly dignity to the general body of the faithful that the hierarchical priest is left with little to distinguish him from those outside the sanctuary.

¹ Pius XI, *Ubi arcano*, A.A.S., XIV, 695. Pius X, *Inter pastoralis officii*, A.S.S. XXXVI, 333. Pius XI, *Divini cultus sanctitatem*, A.A.S., XXI, 34.

² Denzinger, 960.

Other factors have contributed to this attenuation of the difference between priest and layman, and not least the growing popularity of the "Oblation" theories of the sacrifice of the Mass. So long as the essentially sacrificial act was held to consist in something which could not in any sense whatever be attributed also to the laity, there was little danger that the exclusive function of the Priest¹ might be lost to sight. "Destruction" theories, whether real or mystical, leave no room for more than a mental and corroborative role on the part of the faithful: the Priest who immolates, whether really or mystically, offers the sacrifice, while those who assist do nothing more than associate themselves with the sacrificial act. But "Oblation" is an elastic term. It will serve to cover such widely different things as the oblation act of Christ himself; the sacrificial act which is exclusively the function of the celebrating priest; the actual intention of the faithful present at Mass (or even absent from it) to associate themselves with the offering of the sacrifice; or even, finally, the habitual intention of devout Catholics to have their part in the offering of every Mass that is said throughout the world. Therefore the sense in which Oblation is held to constitute the essentially sacrificial act needs to be very carefully determined, under pain of attributing it indiscriminately to all Christians, priests and laity alike.²

II

Method

An important preliminary to the investigation of this difficult question is to decide upon the method to be followed; for two very different ways lie open to the inquirer. He may begin with the priesthood of the laity or he may begin with the priesthood of Christ. If he chooses the first way he will interpret the famous words of St. Peter on the "kingly priesthood" of Christians as meaning that all Christians are priests in the proper sense;³ for, the priesthood of Christ being *ex hypothesi* as yet unconsidered, there will be nothing to suggest an analogy to his mind. Hence this important consequence, that his definition of priesthood properly so called will be framed in such a way as to be applicable univocally to all the baptised, Priests and laity alike. Any distinction which he may subsequently make between ordained priest and lay priest will leave unchanged the generic notion of priest already established, and will serve merely to

¹ The use of the capital has become necessary.

² A striking example of generosity in widely distributing the priestly function may be seen in the view expressed by Dom Odo Casel ten years ago (*Die Messopferlehre der Tradition*; *Theol. u. Glaube*, 1931, p. 361. Cf. Hoffmann's criticism, *ibid.* 1938, pp. 280 ff.) In his theory there is only one sacramental, or externally expressed, oblation and that is the Oblative Act of Christ himself, truly present on the altar. The priest as such does nothing more than consecrate, or render truly present the divine Victim who offers Himself. With this Oblative Act of Christ both priest and faithful internally associate themselves in virtue of the baptismal (or "lay-priesthood") character which they have in common. We mention this opinion to illustrate the way in which an Oblation theory of the Mass may lend itself to extending the priestly powers far beyond the limits of the sanctuary

³ I Peter, ii, 5, 9.

differentiate two species in a genus univocally predicated of them both. Consequently, and in accordance with the logical principle that extension and intension vary in inverse proportion, the inquirer's definition will designate as the priestly function properly so called that minimum of priestly activity which he observes to be common to Priest and layman.¹

If he takes the second way he will consider first the priesthood of Christ, arguing, in our opinion rightly, that it is in Christ that the Christian priesthood is found in the fullness of its essential perfection. Here therefore he will seek his definition, not of priesthood in general, but of the Christian priesthood. Having established in what the priestly status and function of Christ consist, he will pass on to study the Christian priesthood as it is found in those whom Christ at the Last Supper "constituted priests of the New Testament",² with a view to discovering whether the definition of Christian priesthood may be properly and strictly applied to their status and powers. In the light of the same definition he will finally consider the status and powers of the baptised laity. If it fits them he will conclude that the laity are priests in the strict and proper sense. If it is found not to fit them he will conclude that the words of St. Peter are to be understood as an analogy; that is, that the term Christian priest is applied to the laity not according to the fullness of its essential meaning, but only according to part of it.

Let us use this second method and see to what conclusion it leads us.

III

Priesthood, Proper and Analogical

The framework into which the conception of the Ideal Priest must be set is given in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Every High-priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins."³ Whether we regard this or not as a definition of priesthood in general, it is certainly the revealed definition of that priesthood which is perfectly verified in Christ. The Word Incarnate is priest inasmuch as He is mediator and offers sacrifice. He is the perfect Priest because He is the perfect Mediator and because He offers the perfect sacrifice.

He is the perfect Mediator because He is the Word Incarnate, truly God and truly man. Truly man (*ex hominibus assumptus*), He is able to act on behalf of men, to represent the human race in the transaction of mercy whereby we are to be released from the curse of sin and reconciled with God. Truly God, He alone of all the sons of men is full of grace and glory, endowed from the first moment of His human life with that plenitude of supernatural perfection which is the rightful heritage of the only-begotten of the Father.⁴ He is thus set apart from the rest of men and, being free from the malediction of humanity and most pleasing to God

¹ It is by this method that Dr. Niebecker (*Das allgemeine Priestertum der Gläubigen*, Paderborn, 1936, p. 84) excludes from the definition of priesthood properly so called the concept of mediatorship.

² Denzinger, 938.

³ v, 1.

⁴ Cf. John i, 14; *Summa theol.*, III, 26, 2; especially ad 1.

(*sanctus, innocens, impollutus, segregatus a peccatoribus et excelsior coelis factus*), He has access to God, the Holy of Holies, and can obtain for us eternal redemption.¹ Other priests are consecrated to their high office by being anointed with oil. Christ, our High-priest by reason of the Incarnation, is anointed with the very Divinity itself. He is Mediator and Priest, not by an adventitious quality or character, but by reason of what He personally is: the Word Incarnate. "Christ did not glorify himself that he might be made a High-priest; but he that said to him: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place: Thou art a priest for ever."²

The proper function of a priest is to offer sacrifice. Already from the moment of His conception in the immaculate womb of His Mother Christ offers Himself internally in sacrifice to God. "When he cometh into the world he saith: Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldest not; but a body thou hast fitted to me. . . . Then said I: Behold I come; in the head of the book it is written of me that I should do thy will, O God."³ Throughout His life on earth the divine ordinance which predestined Him to offer Himself a redemption for many is ever present to His mind, and a steady sacrificial purpose leads Him step by step from the cradle to the Cross.

But had He done no more than make this interior offering of Himself Christ would not have discharged that function which is proper to the priest; He would not have offered a sacrifice properly so called. For a sacrifice is a sign. It is true that an external act of cult to which no interior worship corresponds is but an empty gesture. But it is also true that an internal act of adoration and submission to the divine will, however laudable and meritorious, is not in the strict sense a sacrifice unless it finds expression in its appropriate external rite. "*Sacrificium visibile*," says St. Augustine, "*invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum, id est, sacrum signum est*."⁴ And a visible sacrifice, as the Council of Trent points out, is what the nature of man requires.⁵ At the Last Supper, therefore, He offered Himself visibly under the sacramental species of bread and wine as a Victim to His Father, and on the Cross He yielded Himself up in sacrifice with the shedding of the last drop of His blood. The perfect Priest thus offers the perfect sacrifice; for the Victim is none other than Himself.

Let us now consider the Christian priesthood as it is found in the subject of Holy Orders. Between the Word Incarnate and a mere man; between Him who is Mediator and Priest in virtue of His own Personality and one who is priest by participation; between Him who is Mediator *in actu primo* and one who is ministerial mediator in applying to souls the fruits of the redemptive act; between Him who offers the all-sufficient sacrifice by His own power as principal offerer and one who offers it as the minister and instrument of the great High-priest—an abyss of difference must lie. Yet it is beyond dispute that the ordained priest, however personally unworthy of his office, is a Christian priest in the strict and proper sense. He is truly a mediator, "taken from among men and ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins".

¹ Heb. vii, 26; ix, 12.

² Heb. v, 5, 6.

³ Heb. x, 5-7; cf. Ps. xxxix 7-9.

⁴ *De civ. Dei*. x 5.

⁵ Denzinger, 938, 948.

He is a man like his fellows. Would that of him, as of his Master, it might be said that he is "holy, innocent and undefiled" and for that reason "separated from sinners". The minister of Christ, however, is set apart from his fellow-men not by reason of his personal sanctity and perfection but by the character of Holy Orders, which empowers him to act in the name of Christ and on behalf of the Church. It is for him, with the help of God's abundant grace, to ensure that his personal character does not belie—even though it can never void—the sacred office which he holds.

Truly a mediator by reason of his priestly character, the minister of Christ offers a sacrifice strictly so called: That the Mass is in the strict sense a sacrifice needs no demonstration here. What is important to stress is the fact that the Priest in virtue of his priestly powers *offers* the sacrifice, i.e. performs the specifically sacrificial act. The elastic meaning of the word offer, above referred to, makes it necessary to labour the point. The act by which the priest offers the sacrifice of the Mass is an act for which he is empowered by the Sacrament of Holy Orders and which those not ordained are therefore unable to perform. This power of offering the body and blood of Christ as Christ himself offered them in sacrifice at the Last Supper belongs as distinctively to the ordained priest as the power of forgiving sins in the sacrament of Penance.¹ It is not a power which the faithful share with him; on the contrary, it is something which "transcends human reason and understanding and with which nothing on earth can be compared".² Whatever view be held, therefore, as to the essentially sacrificial act in the Mass, it is certain that this sacrificial act is performed by the ordained priest in virtue of his priestly character, and that he offers the sacrifice of the Mass by a power of offering which is quite exclusively his.³ This is the unequivocal meaning of the words used by the Bishop when he ordains him: "Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo."

We conclude that the ordained priest, notwithstanding the transcendence of the High-priest himself, is none the less a priest in the strict sense: for (1) he is truly a mediator, and (2) he performs the essentially sacrificial act in the Mass which is a true and proper sacrifice.

Turning now to consider the laity, we need spend little time in showing that the layman is not a Christian priest in the strict and proper sense. He lacks both the essentials of such priesthood. In the first place he is not a mediator, he acts in no representative capacity. On the contrary the laity are represented by the Priest. "It is proper to the priest," says St. Thomas, "to be mediator between God and the people."⁴ "Acts directed to God on the part of an individual," he writes elsewhere, "such as private prayers and vows, may be performed by any baptised person. But only the priest can direct acts to God on behalf of the whole Church. To act in the name of the whole Church is proper to him who consecrates the Eucharist, which is the sacrament of the universal Church."⁵

Nor, in the second place, do the laity perform the sacrificial act in the Mass, the only true sacrifice of the New Law. In what sense they may be

¹ Denzinger, 938, 957, 961.

² Catechism of the Council of Trent, *De ordinis sacramento*, n. 2.

³ Cf. St. Thomas, III, 82, 5, ad 1; III, 82, 10; IV Sent. d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, *sed contra*.

⁴ III, 22, 1.

⁵ IV Sent. d. 24, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2.

said to "offer" the Mass we shall see in a moment. For the present it is sufficient to recall that "to sacrifice" is the exclusive function of the ordained priest.

Lacking the two essentials of priesthood properly so called, the layman is not a priest in the strict sense. If he is called a priest at all, he is called so by analogy.

IV

History

It is time now to give a brief glance at the history of the doctrine of the lay priesthood. The teaching of antiquity on the subject is connected with the following passages of Scripture :

Be you also, as living stones built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. . . . You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people ; that you may declare his virtues who hath called you out of the darkness into his marvellous light (1 Peter ii, 5, 9).

Jesus Christ . . . hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us a kingdom and priests to God and his Father (Apoc. i, 5-6).

Thou hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, out of every tribe and people and nation ; and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests (Apoc. v, 10).

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. In these the second death hath no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ (Apoc. xx, 6).

It seems certain that in all these texts the sacred writers have in mind the words spoken by God to the people of Israel : "If therefore you will keep my covenant, you shall be my peculiar possession above all people ; for all the earth is mine. And you shall be to me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation."¹ If the people of Israel, chosen under the Old Covenant to offer special worship to God, could justly be styled a priestly kingdom, a corporate priest, a people consecrated to God, still more truly could St. Peter and St. John apply that description to the whole body of Christians ; for these are far more intimately one in their mystical union with Christ their priestly Head, who offers to God that immaculate sacrifice of which the Jewish rites were nothing more than the symbols and the foreshadowing. It is in their mystical union with Christ that St. Justin finds a warrant for calling Christians "the true high-priestly people" ; and we may remark also that he is one of the few among the Fathers who connect this common priesthood of the faithful with the Eucharistic sacrifice.² The same thought is dear to St. Augustine, who states the doctrine with masterly brevity in commenting on Apoc. xx, 6 : "Sicut omnes Christianos dicimus propter mysticum chrisma, sic omnes sacerdotes, quoniam membra sunt unius sacerdotis." But it should be observed that in this context he is careful to distinguish the faithful from priests and bishops, "*qui proprie jam vocantur in Ecclesia sacerdotes*".³ Elsewhere the Saint develops the conception of the Church as a sacerdotal body, also with allusion to the Eucharistic

¹ Exodus xix, 5, 6.

² *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 116, 117.

³ *De civ. Dei*, xx, 10. The idea that the post-baptismal anointing is connected with the priesthood of which all Christians are in some sense partakers was a favourite one with the Eastern Fathers ; and it finds support in some oriental liturgies.

sacrifice. But the role ascribed to the members of the Church is pre-eminently that of victim rather than of offerer :

The whole city of the redeemed (he writes), the whole assembly of the saints, is offered to God in a universal sacrifice by the High-priest. . . . When the Apostle (Rom. xii, 1-2) exhorts us to present our bodies a living sacrifice holy and pleasing unto God, we are ourselves this sacrifice of which he speaks. . . . Such then, is the sacrifice of Christians : "Being many we are one body in Christ." This is what the Church so often teaches us in the sacrifice of the altar which the faithful know of. There it is clearly seen that in the thing which she offers, it is she herself that is offered (*De civ. Dei*, x, 6).

We find little that is new on the subject during the centuries which separate St. Augustine from the great scholastics of the Middle Ages. The Eucharist is seldom related to the common priesthood of the faithful, and that priesthood is generally explained by their mystical union with their priestly Head. Greater emphasis than before, however, is laid upon the inner or spiritual sacrifices of prayer and mortification which it is the proper function of the faithful to offer.

The attitude of the great scholastics themselves towards the doctrine is, it must be candidly acknowledged, extremely discouraging. The teaching of St. Thomas may be summarized in two passages in which he meets the contention that, since every good layman is a priest, a layman can consecrate the Eucharist :

Every good man (he answers) is said to be a priest in a mystical sense, inasmuch as he offers himself as a mystical sacrifice, i.e. a living victim, to God (IV Sent. dist. xiii, q. 1, art. 1, qt. 5, sol. I, ad 1).

The just layman is united with Christ by a spiritual union through grace and charity, but not by a sacramental power ; and therefore he has a spiritual priesthood for the offering of spiritual victims, of which it is said in the Psalm : "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit. . . ." (III, 82, 1, ad 2).

Two points are perhaps significant : (1) that in both these quotations the doctrine of the priesthood of the faithful is not treated as a matter to be positively stressed, but rather as an objection to be answered ; and (2) that neither here nor in that part of the *Summa* in which he describes the sacramental character as a participation of the priesthood of Christ does St. Thomas teach that the baptismal character implies any active power of offering the Eucharistic sacrifice. On the contrary he considers the power conferred by the character of baptism to be passive, or receptive.¹ His reticence on the priesthood of the laity in this context is the more surprising when we consider the intimate relation that exists between Baptism and the Eucharist in the teaching of St. Thomas. From saying that the sanctifying virtue of the sacrament of Baptism is due to the fact that it sets the baptised person on the path to the reception of the Eucharist,² it seems an easy step to saying that the character of baptism gives the right to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice. And yet that step he does not take. One is tempted to wonder why. Moreover, in teaching that all who offer the sacrifice of the Mass should communicate he implies that the faithful, in some sense at least, offer the Mass.³ Yet we have not been able to find any passage in his works in which he relates this oblation power to their common priesthood.

¹ III, 63, 6.

² III, 73, 3.

³ Cf. III, 82, 4.

The period of the Reform is one in which we should not have expected the doctrine in question to appear in the foreground. And in fact the heretical claim of Luther that all the faithful are equally priests served to thrust it even further into obscurity. The Council of Trent, however, so framed its condemnation of Luther's doctrine that the analogical priesthood of the laity remains intact,¹ and the Catechism of the Council of Trent devotes a long paragraph to explaining that the priesthood of the faithful is not external but internal.² We summarize it briefly as it may be taken to represent the common teaching of theologians on the subject at the end of the sixteenth century :

- (1) The internal priesthood is common to all the baptised.
- (2) It is found more fully in those who, being in the state of grace, are living members of Christ the High-priest.
- (3) The faithful offer interior or spiritual sacrifices "on the altar of their souls", such as good works, mortifications, etc.
- (4) This interior priesthood is referred to in the following passages of Scripture : 1 Peter ii, 5 ; Rom. xii, 1 ; Ps. l, 19.

From the complete oblivion into which it might perhaps otherwise have fallen, the doctrine seems to have been rescued by the French Oratorians of the seventeenth century. Augustinian in their emphasis, perhaps excessive, upon the disastrous effects of original sin, Bérulle, Condren, and Olier were equally Augustinian in their attachment to the doctrine of the Mystical Body. Their spirituality, it is well known, is based completely upon the living conviction of man's mystical oneness with the Word Incarnate ; and it is undoubtedly to their crusade of self-sacrifice in union with Christ and to the predominance which they accorded to the Oblation aspect of the Mass that we must trace the trend of theological thought which has culminated in the monumental works of Lepin and De la Taille. We have thus reached the present stage of development in which Oblation theories of the Mass are in the ascendant ; the faithful are being made more and more conscious of their "priestly" dignity ; and theologians are seeking to integrate into the dogmatic system the more "active" part in the offering of the Mass which the laity accordingly desire.

V

Synthesis

In conclusion we attempt a synthesis. First, what is the theological basis of the analogy by which the faithful are said to be priests ? Secondly, what is the relation of the priesthood of the laity to the Mass ?³

The faithful, we have said, fail to be priests in the strict sense because they are not mediators. Nevertheless with the divine Mediator they are

¹ Denzinger, 960 : "Si quis omnes Christianos *promiscue* Novi Testamenti sacerdotes esse, aut omnes pari inter se potestate spiritali praeditos affirmet. . . ."

² *De ordinis sacramento*, n. 45.

³ In what follows it is to be understood that the Priest, as a baptised person, shares the priesthood common to the faithful.

mystically one. In His sacrifice on the Cross Christ mediated alone. Hung between earth and heaven, in that majestic and awful solitude which befits the High-priest as He enters into the Holy of Holies, the Word Incarnate alone wrought eternal redemption. Alone He achieved what He alone was able to achieve: redemption *in actu primo*. Alone He reconciled humanity with God and put grace within our reach. That work completed, He could say with His dying breath, "It is consummated". But then followed the marvellous fulfilment of His own prophecy: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself."¹ As Eve had been formed from the side of the sleeping Adam, so the Church is born from the side of the dying Christ. By their baptism all the faithful are drawn into a mystical union with the great High-priest, with Him to work out their redemption *in actu secundo*. Christ is no longer alone, nor are the faithful; together they stand before the face of God, united in a mystical and sacerdotal organism by the strong though invisible links of grace and charity, vitally one, as the branches are one with the vine and the members one with the head.

To this extent, then, the faithful are mediators. Between God and the unbaptised, between God and those not yet united with the mystical Christ, stands the Mystical Body, a corporate Mediator; and the faithful, members of that body, partake of its mediatorial function.²

The second essential of priesthood is the function of "sacrificing", of performing the sacrificial act; and also for lack of this the laity fail to be priests in the strict sense. Yet there can be no doubt that the mystical union of the faithful with Christ lends to their good works a specially sacerdotal character. In the light of the doctrine of the Mystical Body St. Peter's words assume a new significance: "You are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." We feel sure that had St. Paul written this passage we should have read, "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God *in Christ Jesus*". The good works of the baptised, their prayers, their self-denial and mortification, receive a sacrificial value because they are done in Christ; they are the spiritual offerings of those who are mystically one with the divine High-priest. The faithful offer themselves a living sacrifice, being one with Him who is both Priest and Victim: "omnes sacerdotes quoniam membra sunt unius sacerdotis."

All this, sublime privilege though it is for the baptised, does not suffice to make them priests in the proper sense. Their mediatorship belongs to them not as individuals but as members of a mediatorial body; the sacrifices which they offer are spiritual or internal, not sacrifices strictly so called. Nevertheless they partake of the essentials of priesthood to an extent which gives them the right to be called priests by analogy.

What, finally, is the relation of this spiritual priesthood to the Mass? Are we to say that to the visible sacrifice of the New Law, in which the

¹ John xii, 32.

² Cf. Pius XI, *Miserentissimus Redemptor* (Brev. Rom., *Infra Oct. Sacrat. Cordis Jesu*, fer. ii, lectio vi): "The whole Christian people, rightly called by the Prince of the Apostles a chosen generation and a kingly priesthood, is bound both for itself and for the whole human race to make offering for sins; in much the same way (*haud aliter propemodum*) as every priest and high-priest taken from among men is appointed for men in the things that appertain to God."

Victim of Calvary is offered every day upon our altars, the interior priesthood of the faithful is entirely extraneous? Surely not. The visible sacrifice is the sign of the invisible sacrifice. The organic unity of revealed truth forces us to conclude that the Mass is intended to be the visible and sacramental expression of the inner sacrifice of the faithful, and that, powerless though they are to perform that sacrificial act by which alone the Eucharistic sacrifice is properly offered, there is yet room in the Mass for the exercise of their analogical priesthood.

For the understanding of this it is necessary to consider especially the Offertory. Ancient liturgical customs, partially surviving even today in some places, gave the faithful a prominent role in this part of the Mass. And even when their privilege of providing the materials of the sacrifice appears only in such survivals as Mass stipends and offertory collections, we still see in the Offertory the point at which the interior priesthood of the faithful is in continuity with the priesthood properly so called.

It is clear that in offering their gifts the faithful are doing more than exercise a useful function. They are symbolizing their will to offer themselves. When their gifts are laid upon the altar it is the whole body of the faithful, priests and laity alike—the Mystical Body, in fact—which is thereby signified as a victim to be offered to God.¹ But is the Offertory the Eucharistic sacrifice? If it were, we should have no difficulty in admitting that the faithful have an external and active part in offering the Mass. Indeed the offering of the priest would differ from theirs only inasmuch as he offers in a representative and official capacity.

But the victim of the Eucharistic sacrifice is not mere bread and wine. The Mass is the oblation of the true Body and Blood of Christ. Left to themselves, the faithful can offer nothing more than earthly symbols of their interior sacrifice. If the sacrifice of the New Law is to be their sacrifice, if their self-oblation is to find expression in the divine Victim of the Mass, then they stand in need of a mediator; and not only a mediator who will act in their name, but a mediator who possesses the mysterious power of transforming, indeed of transubstantiating, their gifts so that they become truly and really the immaculate Victim who alone is acceptable in God's sight. It is here that the analogical priesthood of the faithful is revealed in all its essential insufficiency. If that interior priesthood is to be related to the visible sacrifice of the Church it needs to be complemented by a priesthood properly so called; the ordained priest must intervene with his sacerdotal power. Alone the Priest enters into the Holy of Holies where the Victim of the Mass is mystically slain and offered; alone he performs the truly sacrificial act; alone, as the minister of Christ and acting in His name, he utters those awesome words by which the earthly symbols of the Church's self-offering are converted into the true Body and Blood of Christ and offered in sacrifice to God.

¹ See, for example, the *Secret* for Monday within the Octave of Pentecost: "Propitius, Domine, quaesumus, haec dona sanctifica: et hostiae spiritalis oblatione suscepta, nosmetipsos tibi perferre munus aeternum." Or the *Secret* for Corpus Christi: "Ecclesiae tuae, quaesumus, Domine, unitatis et pacis propitius dona concede, quae sub oblatiis muneribus mystice designantur." The symbolism of bread and wine, formed respectively out of many grains of wheat and many grapes, is found in early liturgical prayers (e.g. *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, lib. 7, cap. 25) as signifying the unity of the mystical body. The same idea is expressed by the mixture of a few drops of water with the wine at the Offertory.

The faithful continue to offer, but in their oblation now there is nothing that is visible or sacramental. It is a purely internal act, by which they mentally and voluntarily associate themselves with the sacramental and strictly sacrificial offering made by the Priest. "Quod specialiter adimpletur ministerio sacerdotum," says Pope Innocent III, "hoc universaliter agitur voto fidelium."¹

Not only do they continue to offer; they continue also to be offered. It is true that the bread and wine, which had symbolized their self-oblation, are no longer on the altar; they have become the Body and Blood of Christ. Yet the accidents which remain are a reminder that what has now become the divine Victim was formerly the bread and wine which the faithful had given in token of their interior sacrifice. The true Body of Christ, lying on the corporal beneath the sacramental species, is the symbol of His Mystical Body. If the offering of the faithful is now purely internal, the same cannot be said of their role of victim; for they, with all the members of the Church, are visibly portrayed on the altar as offered in and with Christ himself. "This," says St. Augustine, "is what the Church so often teaches us in the sacrifice of the altar which the faithful know of. There it is clearly seen that in the thing which she offers, it is she herself that is offered."²

The interior offering of the faithful and their will to be identified with the immaculate Victim receive respectively their complement and sacramental consummation in Holy Communion. Here their oblation act, secret since the Offertory, receives final and outward recognition. Communion is the sign that the Mass is their sacrifice. True, they do not offer the Sacrament of the Eucharist, they receive it. But the Sacrament is God's princely recompense for what they have offered, for it is the exclusive privilege of those who offer the sacrifice to partake of the Victim.³ In receiving the Sacrament their will to be united with the Victim of Calvary is granted beyond all human desire, for "He kneads His body with ours so that we become one thing, like a body joined to the head. . . . We become one body, and members of His flesh and of His bones."⁴

The priesthood of the laity, then, finds expression in the Mass; but only because it becomes incorporated with the proper priesthood of the Priest. The priesthood of the faithful, absolutely considered, is restricted to the sphere of internal sacrifice and spiritual victimhood. Their oblation in the Mass is not of itself properly sacrificial; it becomes integrated into the strictly sacerdotal function of the Church only through the proper priesthood of the ordained minister of Christ.

G. D. SMITH.

¹ *De sacr. altar. myst.*, lib. 3, cap. 6 (P.L. 217, 845). Compare the words of the *Instructio* of the Congregation of the Council (CLERGY REVIEW, December 1941, XXI, p. 366). "The faithful should not assist at Mass in a purely passive way, but should unite themselves in mind and heart, in faith and charity, with the priests who perform the sacred rite."

² *De civ. Dei*, x, 6.

³ III, 82, 4. Cf. I Cor. x, 18.

⁴ Chrysostom, Hom. 46 in *Joannem*, 2, 3.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND ENGLISH CULTURE

ALTHOUGH we are fairly well agreed that Theology is extremely important, even if it be only regarded in practice as an indispensable means to the effective dissemination of Catholic truth, we agree less well in our attitude towards Culture (whatever the meaning we attach to that somewhat equivocal term). One reason may be that discussions on the latter topic quickly reveal their personal implications; the flaws in our own armour are disconcertingly brought to light and we find, to our confusion, that some criterion of culture has been laid down in accordance with which we must be pronounced as something rather less than gentlemen. So widely canvassed has the whole problem of culture now become that one may well feel a certain sympathy with the Nazi propagandist who declared that, whenever he heard the German equivalent of that word, he invariably "felt for his revolver".

Nevertheless the subject is clearly one of capital importance. The Church has always preferred holiness in her priests to mere learning; but it is unnecessary to assume an antithesis between these two qualities. Sanctity is not less but more genuine when it manifests that zeal for God which is "according to knowledge". And the knowledge in question cannot mean simply a mastery of the "sacred sciences" in the form presented to us by the traditional pedagogy of the Church. It must include also those branches of secular¹ learning with which to minister to God's word and afford it worthy means of expression. Theology must always remain "Queen of the Sciences"; but unless she can at times disclose her royal estate, surrounded by her handmaids and mistress over an imperial domain, her dignity is likely to pass unacknowledged. Moreover, theological learning will bear little fruit if its possessor lacks the expository power with which to do justice to the underlying doctrine and render it intelligible to those unversed in its technicalities.

The disharmony which, it is sometimes suggested,² exists between the accepted system of Dogmatic instruction and the means adopted for imparting, or eliciting, information in other subjects reaches, I believe, a level deeper than that of educational method. It is the fashion nowadays to express contempt for the much-abused theological manuals, though one may question whether the hostile critics always show due appreciation of the difficulties confronting their authors. Yet it must surely be admitted that these text-books, so markedly uniform in structure, represent in some inadequate way the Church's own pedagogical method *vis-à-vis* the modern

¹ A distinguished literary critic observes: "There is nothing secular on the earth, but the secular mind of man. . . ." A. C. Bradley, *A Miscellany*, p. 241.

² A stimulating article by "Paedagogus" on "The Teaching of Dogmatic Theology" (CLERGY REVIEW 1941, XXI, p. 9) has recently attracted attention, favourable and otherwise. Though thought-provoking and suggestive, it seemed to me to approach a highly complex subject with too great facility; nor does the pseudonymous author show sufficient awareness of a possible fallacy which would do much to vitiate his thesis: viz., that methods of exposition proper to one discipline are necessarily applicable to another. While traversing ground other than that directly touched on by "Paedagogus", I shall attempt to justify this criticism; even at the risk of being countercharged with confusing the issue and not meeting him at every point.

world. Not that any of them can claim such oecumenical authority, nor seek immunity from legitimate criticism on that account ; but the inference may fairly be drawn that, if there exists any real incompatibility between the cast of mind they tend to form and that engendered by the pursuit, let us say, of humane letters in one of our older universities then this is but a symptom of a much deeper antagonism between the Catholic philosophy and post-Renaissance English culture.

That Catholic Christianity can flourish on our native soil has been demonstrated by a thousand years of English history. The loyalty of Catholics to the Crown and their possession of the patriotic virtues are not phenomena peculiar to pre-Reformation times, as the Roll of Honour of both the last and the present war may serve to show. Yet the coincidence of Britain's political ascendancy with her gradual relinquishment of the old religion has left an indelible impression on the minds of cultivated Englishmen. Whether or not it was an historical accident that the achievements of the English under the Tudor monarchs, so far-reaching and so tangible, should have been accompanied by the organized suppression of Catholicism we need not now enquire ; the fact remains that it was so, and that England's greatness is commonly regarded as dating from that period of transition.

While the Armada was going to pieces on the rocks, England was at last entering on the wider spaces of her destiny ; and the sense of adventure in untrodden regions of mind and matter inspired the rising generation, who went out in the spirit of free individual initiative to explore new worlds of land and water, knowledge and imagination.¹

Or again :

The Renaissance, with its spirit of enquiry and its vision of the ancient freedom of Greek and Roman thought, had been transplanted from Italy, where it was fast withering away under the hands of Spaniards and Jesuits. It bloomed afresh in England, tended by poets who grafted it on English trees in the Forest of Arden.²

Judgements such as these, in some respects so superficial, are yet based on the maturest scholarship. They cannot be dismissed as the simple product of anti-Catholic prejudice, if only because they help to form the historical outlook of the average educated Englishman.

The tradition that Catholicism is "un-English", which historians of a certain school are fond of tracing back to the days of Celtic Christianity, has been fostered in the national mind by the events which led up to, and followed upon, "the glorious Revolution" of 1688-9. Though the Oxford Movement in the last century has done much to restore to favour Catholic ceremonial and, in regard to doctrine, has helped to explode the myth that the Reformation was a return to primitive Christianity, its spirit binds it more closely to England than to Rome. The logic of Newman and his followers has not appealed to all who would profess themselves in sympathy with their principles. Dr. Inge records, with evident satisfaction, the verdict of Professor Santayana.

If the Englishman likes to call himself a Catholic, it is a fad, like a thousand others, to which his inner man, so seriously playful, is prone to lend itself. He may go over to

¹ G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England*, p. 272.

² *Ibid.*, p. 366.

Rome on a spiritual tour; but if he is converted really and becomes a Catholic at heart, he is no longer the man he was. Words cannot measure the chasm which must henceforth separate him from everything at home. For a modern Englishman, with freedom and experiment and reserve in his blood, to go over to Rome is essential suicide; the inner man must succumb first. Such an Englishman might become a saint, but only by becoming a foreigner.¹

The inadequacy of this judgement does not wholly deprive it of interest; as its author is an observer of deep insight, it is worth while considering why it should have been made. It has often been remarked that the development of the English genius in modern times has been political rather than religious. Whatever the abuses attending the growth of parliamentary institutions, we have evolved a system of government which, with all its deficiencies, is both effective and worthy of human dignity. As Mr. Christopher Dawson has pointed out, "The English State in the past has been the classical example of that mixed constitution which was the political ideal of St. Thomas Aquinas".² Unfortunately a confusion has arisen in the popular mind between the conditions of a sound national polity and the basic principles of good government; deference towards the personal liberties of each citizen has come to be regarded as more desirable than the shaping of the nation's life as a whole upon some determined plan. Thus we have grown to regard dictatorship and absolutism in all its forms with unqualified abhorrence, since the chief function of statesmen is to safeguard individual freedom and to preserve a spirit of universal toleration. It is the breadth and comprehensiveness of this ideal which have enabled it to be transferred to the sphere of religion without (as many would claim) infringing its prerogatives. Thus the Erastian character of the Elizabethan settlement, itself chiefly a political manœuvre, does not appear to the Englishman of today the anomaly that it did to his sixteenth-century ancestor. The nominal control of religion by King and Parliament is not, as the uncomprehending might suppose, Caesar's usurpation of the rights of God; that is to forget that the secular power is of its nature so liberal as in no wise to interfere with the access of the individual soul to God. Membership of the National Church is thus not seen as irreconcilable with wholehearted allegiance to Christianity, and even, since the religion of Christ cannot be restricted to a single country, communion with the Church Catholic.

Compared with this régime, so indulgent to freedom of choice in the things of the spirit, the seemingly uncompromising attitude of Latin Christianity grates harshly upon the susceptibilities of the liberty-loving Anglo-Saxon. He is happy in the thought that his forebears have long since thrown off the yoke of the "priestly Caesar" at the Vatican. Having learned from Hobbes, among others, that the Papacy is "no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof", he is ill-disposed to bear with its despotic pretensions in this democratic twentieth century. Though that institution may well have preserved more of original Christianity than a more bigoted age was willing to allow, the fact remains that a world-wide unitary system of Church government is now an anachronism. The days of a united Europe, owing temporal allegiance to the Emperor and acknowledging the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope,

¹ W. R. Inge, *Lay Thoughts of a Dean*, p. 300.

² *Beyond Politics*, p. 48.

have passed away. Nationalism holds the field and traditional Christianity must be taught and practised within the distinctive framework proper to each state.

The case that can be formulated on these lines, because of its strong appeal to the emotions, is a formidable one. Only by degrees can the non-Catholic, schooled in the English tradition, be led to discriminate between its truth and falsehood. He would perhaps be surprised to find us admitting that many of the externals of ecclesiastical organization, for example, the territorial arrangement of provinces and dioceses, are based upon the imperial system; that the rôle of Pontifex Maximus, as well as some of the functions of the Emperor, came in the course of time not unnaturally to be performed by the Bishop of Rome; that many of the incidental elements which enrich the Latin Liturgy may well derive from pagan sources, just as a number of the feasts in the Church's calendar are Christianizations of heathen festivals; that the Canon Law, so conspicuous an instrument in the day-to-day working of the Church, reveals much of the spirit of the ancient Roman jurists. All this can be conceded without apology, as exemplifying a principle inherent in Catholicism, viz. that grace does not destroy but perfects what is naturally good; the supernatural order is built upon, while it exalts and transforms, the order of nature. What is essential to the Church's position, that she is uniquely Christian, remains. The message of the Church, not her material habiliments, authenticates her origin from Christ. The doctrine about God and human destiny, the sublime ethical code, above all, the Spirit which gives life to that teaching and inspires its practice—these are what the opponents of Catholicism must show to be unchristian before her claims can be dismissed. They must show also that the unequivocal manner in which the Church proclaims her message is alien to the methods of One who taught, not as the scribes, but as "having authority". The historic Creeds and Conciliar definitions, which elucidate "the faith once delivered to the saints", re-echo not the decrees of Caesar but the voice of Christ. Happily it is now being increasingly recognized that an undogmatic Christianity is a myth of the sentimentalists, both ineffective as a motive force in religion and unrelated to the gospel records. As Miss Sayers writes, in one of her admirable pamphlets,¹ "It is the dogma that is the drama—not beautiful phrases, nor comforting sentiments, nor vague aspirations to loving-kindness and uplift, nor the promise of something nice after death—but the terrifying assertion that the same God who made the world lived in the world and passed through the grave and gate of death."

Now we have seen that, as a nation, the English people have not habitually before their minds any very clear distinction between politics and religion. The two have been so closely interwoven in our history that it now seems impossible, perhaps even undesirable, to disentangle them. Theories of the relationship between Church and State may safely be left to the dissertations of theologians and philosophers; John Bull need not concern himself with them.² As long as the balanced system of

¹ *Strong Meat*, p. 44.

² "The subject of Church and State . . . is not, except at moments which lend themselves to newspaper exploitation, a subject in which the general public takes much interest."
—T. S. Eliot, *The Idea of a Christian Society*, p. 11.

party-government, with its interplay of contending forces, its checks and counter-checks, so opposed to the authoritarian spirit, whether political or religious, leaves him free to worship God according to his conscience, why should he bother his head about a possible theoretical inconsistency? And because in this island he breathes freely the misty atmosphere of compromise he feels ill at ease when introduced to, or obliged to inhale, the clear dry air of what he has been taught to call "Mediterranean Christianity". Dictatorship in politics has proved an unmitigated disaster. Is any happier outcome to be looked for from dictatorship in religion?¹

Other causes, besides our political history, have helped to make the English mind hostile to an explicitly dogmatic form of Christianity. Imagination, it has often been remarked, not abstract intellectual power, is our strong point; we tend to poetry rather than metaphysics. And the poet is stirred to sympathy by the picturesque, the suggestive, and, at a profounder level, by that "something far more deeply interfused"; the habitat of the poetical mind is the rich but ill-defined borderland between intelligence and sense, where the radiance of universal ideas is tempered to the gaze by the often delightful obscurities of simile and metaphor. The British contribution to philosophy, as represented by such thinkers as Locke and Hume, has been out of line with the Graeco-Christian tradition, so notably exemplified in Plato, Aristotle and St. Thomas. True to our native propensity towards the concrete and tangible, we have given birth to philosophies which are materialistic and sceptical. "Materialism is the natural-born son of Great Britain," observes Engels in his *Ludwig Feuerbach*; "Nominalism, the first form of materialism, is chiefly found among the English schoolmen."² With such antecedents it is not surprising that our modern culture, notwithstanding its vast accumulations of learning and its scientific and literary treasures, should have reached on the ultimate questions the *ne plus ultra* of doubt and uncertainty. An Oxford theologian records the judgement of an academic teacher of philosophy that the only proposition which could be said, after two milleniums and a half of intensive speculation, carried on by the most powerful minds of Europe, to be generally accepted and agreed upon by philosophers of all schools of thought, amounts to no more than this—"it is possible that something may exist".³

I suggest that it is in the light of some such reflections as these that we must consider how best to present Dogmatic Theology to minds which should also be imbued with what is of most value in the English humanistic tradition. It is worth observing that the very word "dogmatic" is now commonly employed as a term of abuse, an epithet with which to stigmatize loose and unguarded assertions misrepresenting or oversimplifying

¹ An historian friend suggests that too much weight has been given in the foregoing paragraphs to the Whig, or Liberal, tradition in English history, and that the continuity of another and deeper element in the national character which finds Catholicism congenial to it has not been sufficiently stressed. This may well be true, and I record the criticism to prevent misunderstanding. That it is possible to be at once thoroughly English and wholeheartedly Catholic I hold to be as consistent with political theory as it is demonstrable by the facts.

² Quoted from Gilson's *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, p. 291.

³ N. P. Williams, D.D., in his essay, "What is Theology?" in *The Study of Theology* (ed. Kenneth E. Kirk, D.D.), p. 68.

the facts. While the apostle's ideal of becoming "all things to all men" demands of us that we should adapt ourselves to the mental habits of our contemporaries, we should not succumb to the temptation of selling the least part of our doctrinal birthright for the most attractive mess of cultural pottage. The familiar manuals of theology are vulnerable at many points, though much of the criticism levelled against them seems often beside the mark;¹ but the procedure followed, for example, by an author such as Diekamp, the *layout* of the subject (as it has been called), is surely in conformity with the Catholic theological tradition and, in contradistinction from the proposed alternative, the expository method proper to the science of theology.

This is not to deny the value of the heuristic method; it conforms to our natural mental processes and, whenever something more than memory-training is called for, should obviously be employed wherever practicable.² Its place in the training of the theological student is, or should be, considerable; although, if he has been rightly coached in philosophy, his mind should not need the aid of artificial stimulation. In his Apologetics Course, the discussion of the motives of credibility and each stage of the *praeambula fidei* affords ample scope for Socratic questionings. In Patristics and the History of Dogma he can enter sympathetically into the speculations of the Fathers which prepared the way for the Conciliar definitions, making their difficulties his own and observing how conclusions were reached by stress of argument and controversy. Even within the sphere of Dogmatic Theology itself an analysis of the terms employed and the weighing of the *rationes ex convenientia* can lend themselves to a method far subtler than that of didactic asseveration. But when all this has been admitted it must still be denied that Theology properly so called, as it is now understood by the Church, could ever legitimately be dealt with in the way recently desiderated in these pages.

To suppose that any dogmatic thesis, whether it be *de fide* or a strict theological conclusion, could be proposed, even hypothetically, "as a problem urgently demanding an answer" argues a serious misconception both of what theology is and what theologians attempt to do. The starting point of theology is not "the loosely expressed testimonies of early writers", but the revealed truths, the *revelata*, as proposed to us by the Church, derived in their turn from her creeds and conciliar definitions. This is

¹ The manuals are unsatisfactory because they attempt, laudably enough, the impossible, viz. the adequate presentation (at least in outline) of the whole of the highly elaborated system of Catholic Doctrine. Inevitably then their authors must touch upon such diverse departments of learning as Biblical History, Scriptural Exegesis, Patrology, Ecclesiastical History, Comparative Religion, Philosophy, as well as Theology proper. Having to be content with the bare essentials, they could scarcely do otherwise than produce the schematic, cut-and-dried compilations that we know. Moreover, as much of the work cannot but be derivative, the evidence of the "scissors and paste" is often apparent. Yet the manuals are not written for the experts and professional theologians. They are designed as text-books for the student, to be expounded and enlarged upon by a professor who has himself some familiarity with the sources which have inspired them; they serve also as a work of reference for the priest in later years. So considered, can it be denied that many of them attain a degree of excellence?

² Is not "Paedagogus" guilty of a slight inconsistency in describing the present-day application of an education method which is admittedly as old as Socrates as "a positively Copernican and universally recognized revolution"?

"the mass of carefully articulated truth" which the writers of the manuals attempt to embody in their theses. The texts from Scripture, the Patristic testimony, the *Rationes Theologicae* are not the premises of which the thesis itself is the conclusion; they are indications that the doctrine in question harmonizes with God's written word, that it has been held by approved witnesses to Catholic tradition, that it is not opposed to, and has certain analogies with, the findings of unaided reason. But it is an error to imagine that a theological thesis is intended to be deduced from the "evidence" offered in support of it, even though this be somewhat misleadingly described as "probatio". The function of the twofold support to divine revelation, *auctoritas* and *ratio*, is to strengthen and illuminate the supernatural virtue of faith in its contemplation of the revealed mysteries. To suggest to the theologians that they should handle such material, in the manner of the writers of detective stories, as so many clues leading to the inevitable dénouement, is to invite them to offend against the most elementary canons of their science.

Let us take such familiar theses as the following: *Divinarum personarum operatio ad extra unus actus est tribus personis communis*¹ or *Persona Christi vi unionis hypostaticae ex divina et humana natura componitur*.² These have only to be stated for us to see that they are not problems to be solved but affirmations about God to be accepted by divine faith. In this context, "to propose the subject for discussion as an open question, not as a thesis" implies something far more serious than the obvious conclusion that it is diametrically opposed to the orthodox method of theology. What professor could conceivably approach such themes—and there we are at the very heart of Christian theology³—"not as a thesis to be defended but as a problem to be solved"? By what prodigies of dialectic will he reach the stage of having "arrived at last at a real definition, the solution of all the problems proposed"? The correct procedure—so compendiously enunciated in the *fides quaerens intellectum* of Christian tradition—is quite otherwise. Adhering *ex animo* to the truth of faith, as the datum, the incontestable⁴ fact—though a fact which no amount of reasoning will enable us strictly to verify—we turn for support in our belief to history, as represented by the *verbum Domini traditum vel scriptum*. Only then do we attempt so far as may be, by employing human reason, to penetrate the meaning and discern the implications of what is proposed to us by the Church, in order that the mind may become more deeply impregnated with divine revelation. This is the method pursued by the authors of our theological manuals; it may be "preposterous" when compared with the order of presentation

¹ Diekamp, I, p. 344.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 276. Unfortunately, the example selected from St. Thomas by "Paedagogus"—*utrum aliqua passio sit in anima*—is not a thesis in Dogmatic Theology, so that it hardly illustrates his point.

³ *Circa haec ergo duo tota fidei cognitio versatur: scilicet circa Divinitatem Trinitatis et humanitatem Christi*—S. Thomas, *Compendium Theologiae*, c. 2.

⁴ Incontestable, because proposed by the Church, the infallible "rule of faith": *Regula remota fidei est S. Scriptura et traditio divina, quia veritates revelatae et credendae in S. Scriptura et in divinis traditionibus continentur, ex quibus Ecclesia doctrinas ad credendum proponendas haurit. Regula vero proxima est Ecclesia, immo strictius doctrina Ecclesiae, i.e. doctrina ab Ecclesia ad credendum proposita, quia per huiusmodi proxime et immediate fides determinatur*.—Schultes, *De Ecclesia*, p. 599.

"used by successful teachers of similar subjects¹ in the past", but it is surely the only one consonant with the nature of Catholic theology.

It may be useful to recall the significance which the theologians attach to their science. *Theologia est scientia de Deo rebusque divinis a veritatibus revelatis procedens*² is sufficiently clear, as well as being a satisfactory summary of the position adopted by St. Thomas in the opening question of the *Summa Theologica*. The point relevant to our present discussion is that theology, in so far as it reasons at all, argues *from*, not *to*, its *de fide* theses. The articles of faith are the theologian's first principles and, like the primary postulates of other sciences, are not the subject of proof: *sicut aliae scientiae non argumentantur ad sua principia probanda . . . ita haec doctrina non argumentatur ad sua principia probanda, quae sunt articuli fidei*.³ They are even in a sense *per se nota* to the believer, as are the first principles of being to the unaided human reason by the light of the active intellect: *Ista doctrina habet pro principiis primis articulos fidei, qui per lumen fidei infusum per se noti sunt habenti fidem, sicut et principia naturaliter nobis insita per lumen intellectus agentis*.⁴ The propositions from which theology develops are derived from a yet higher science, viz. God's intuitive knowledge of Himself, shared by those who see the Beatific Vision, and imparted to us in the articles of faith: *procedit ex principiis notis lumine superioris scientiae, quae scilicet est scientia Dei et beatorum*.⁵

It is to be hoped that these animadversions on an attempt at constructive criticism of our theological methods will not be interpreted as dictated by, or an encouragement to, self-complacency. Professors of theology are a fair target for the shafts of their victims, and none but a hireling would entrench himself behind a wall of inveterate prejudice or seek shelter in the mists of obscurantism. Because the manualists are often taken to task unfairly it does not follow that their shortcomings should pass without comment. Moreover, while adhering to the method proper to theology, we should avoid adding to the students' difficulties by an exposition which is stereotyped and lifeless. The tractates which enter, so to say, into the texture of human psychology—e.g. the discussion of the theological virtue of faith—should clearly be treated more "empirically" than can the abstruser treatises on the Trinity and the Incarnate Word.⁶ St. Thomas himself certainly handled his materials with greater freedom than is our present custom⁷; though the reasons which made this possible, quite apart from his own genius, should not be overlooked. Living in the ages of faith, with scriptural inspiration and the authority of Catholic tradition as embodied in the Fathers regarded (save by the *gentiles*) as axiomatic, he could assume much of what has now to be carefully explained and defended. Seven General Councils have assembled since his day, representing in their decrees a development of doctrine much greater than is commonly sup-

¹ Here, it seems, is the fundamental confusion. There are no "similar subjects" to Catholic Theology. It is, by definition, an unique science.

² Diekamp, I, p. 2.

³ *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 1, a. 8.

⁴ St. Thomas, *In Sent.* I prol. a 3, sol. 2.

⁵ *Summa*, *ibid.*, a. 2.

⁶ Though even here the procedure cannot but be theological. The Vatican definition of Faith (Sess. III, c. iii; Denz. 1789) is itself to be believed *de fide*; it could not be arrived at as the only possible conclusion after a judicious weighing of arguments for and against.

⁷ When, however, in his *Compendium Theologiae*, he wrote the mediaeval equivalent of the modern manual, his manner, as we should expect, is not heuristic but didactic.

posed—a circumstance which illuminates, but also narrows, the field of speculation open to contemporary theologians. Finally, and perhaps most significant of all, there has taken place within the tradition of the *philosophia perennis* that break in continuity effected by Descartes, what Dr. Temple has called the Cartesian *faux pas*,¹ which has diverted the speculations of modern philosophers away from the bedrock of critical realism which formed the rational foundation for the great theological achievements of the thirteenth century.

A culture must be judged in the last resort by its philosophy, the "wisdom" to which it ultimately appeals. It is because the post-Reformation philosophical systems have vitiated so much of modern thought (and what, if we consider the influence of a thinker such as Hegel, shall we say of their influence upon modern action?) that any proposal to modernize methods deriving from an older and more stable tradition must always call for close examination. As Dr. Williams remarks, in the connection just alluded to, "the mistaken direction which Descartes gave to all subsequent philosophical speculation by his famous aphorism *cogito, ergo sum*, and by the speculations founded upon it, imbued philosophy with the fatal conviction that all knowledge is merely knowledge of the mind's own ideas, and not, or not necessarily, knowledge of objective reality. Locke, Berkley and Hume successively intensified this introverted and subjectivist tendency in philosophy, which reached its height in Kant's denial to the human mind of any knowledge of things as they are in themselves, and to the great scholastic arguments for the existence of God, any real validity. This fundamental scepticism completely abolishes the possibility of any real Natural Theology."²—And, it might have been added, of any theology based on supernatural revelation also.

That seminary students often find their Dogmatic Theology the most difficult part of their work is not to be wondered at, as it is the abstrusest of all the sciences and one to which their humane studies offer no parallel, but that they also find it the "least interesting" comes as a disconcerting surprise. Perhaps "Paedagogus" is generalizing too readily from his own experience. However that may be, it does not seem that the solution lies in any drastic revision of our present system of teaching, even if this could be done without jeopardizing the whole position of theology. The value of the heuristic method, as a stimulant to sluggish wits, cannot be denied; one hopes that it will never be supplanted from its place in the schoolroom. But there is a maturer habit of mind, to which the statement of truth is more agreeable than the propounding of questions. "Those who know will pass their time more pleasantly than those who enquire," observes Aristotle, alluding to the life of *theoria*.³ It is in continuity with this

¹ *Nature, Man and God*, Lecture III.

² *Loc. cit.*, p. 68, 69.

³ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177a 26. It is instructive to note how the moderns have failed to appreciate Aristotle's point of view as to the nature of the "good life". Leibnitz thought that beatitude consists in passing from one pleasure to another; Lessing preferred endless research to the possession of truth, which would be *monotonous*; Kant considers the boredom which it would seem God must experience in the everlasting contemplation of Himself. Cf. Maritain's "First Lecture" in his *A Preface to Metaphysics*, where the confusion between the intellectual approach to a "problem" and that proper to a supernatural "mystery" is described as "the climax of spiritual disorder".

tradition that the Church prescribes, as a preliminary to her theological studies, a systematic training of the speculative intellect by a course of Thomistic philosophy. The mental qualities demanded of a student of theology, as distinct from an indispensable equipment of positive learning, are not necessarily of the sort that have to be provoked to activity by being presented with "problems", hypothetical or real, as is the modern way. They can be reduced to three: first, the gift of supernatural faith, whereby he apprehends and steadfastly adheres to the revealed truths; secondly, a trained understanding (*intellectus*), with which to ponder their significance; thirdly, the power of ratiocination (*ratio*),¹ which enables him to deduce, or at least follow the deduction of, what is implied in the revealed truths. These are the intellectual *habitus* which before all others must be brought to birth and fostered in the minds of our theological students.

With the practical problem of how best to temper what are sometimes felt to be the "aridities" of our system of theological training with the less austere air of a liberal and humane culture I have little space to deal. Obviously the traditions of a great university can be, in this connection, an invaluable influence for good. It is no undue concession to the world and its ways to desire that a priest should expound Catholic truth with at least the effectiveness and elegance at the command of the professor of any branch of merely human learning; that the occasional peremptoriness in manner and unnecessary intransigence of attitude, of which he is not infrequently accused, should be softened by contact with a less contracted atmosphere than that of our theological schools; that he should know how to state his case tentatively and with modesty, and not as if the infallible authority of the Church were vested in his own person; that he should be courteous and magnanimous in controversy and conform gracefully to the conventions of social intercourse. These are the virtues which distinguish the man who is civilized, *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, from one who is not. As they are but the natural counterpart—and could be made the visible outflowing—of divine charity and Christian wisdom, they should be prized by every priest. Moreover, provided he realizes their value, he will acquire them substantially, whether or not he receives the advantages of prolonged contact with a secular university.

But when we come to what is essential to culture, "the acquainting ourselves with the best that has been known and said in the world",² in Matthew Arnold's famous definition, by what standard of "the best" is the normal university graduate to be pronounced more cultured than the product of our Catholic seminaries? Certainly if we accept what the same writer elsewhere calls "the great aim of culture", as being "the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail",³ there can be little doubt about which of the two must receive the favourable verdict. The benefits of every educational method are offset by accom-

¹ St. Thomas explains the primacy of *intellectus* over *ratio* with reference to theology in Q. 6, art. 1 of his *Expositio in Librum Boetii de Trinitate*. The study of this magisterial *quaestio* would afford a valuable corrective of any tendency to an uncritical enthusiasm for the academic fashions of the hour. Art. 1 opens with the highly relevant observation: *Modus scientiae debet respondere materiae*. . . .

² *Literature and Dogma*, preface to 1873 edition.

³ *Culture and Anarchy*, p. 12.

panying defects. The limitations of the modern university system are more serious, though not perhaps so obvious, as those which are alleged to result as a by-product of our ecclesiastical discipline. As a training in sheer intelligence and a preparation for facing the great facts of life the latter has an immeasurable advantage over the former. Mr. Belloc's "remote and ineffectual Don", though a caricature, is in some respects the logical outcome of the cultural processes through which he has passed and is not without his counterpart in real life. The trivial-mindedness of so many of the learned is deservedly the jest of the man-in-the-street and their characteristic modern diversions—the reading and writing of detective novels and the solving of crossword puzzles—are perhaps a juster indication of the worth of their less frivolous preoccupations than they would be willing to allow. The somewhat unkind comment passed, I believe, on the great Duke of Wellington, that he was "educated beyond his abilities", has doubtless its wider application; it may contain a warning and a theme of self-examination for many of us.

In conclusion I would remark, what must have occurred to many minds, that Cardinal Newman offers a most fruitful source of inspiration to those who would engage in the work of shaping, without impairing, the age-long universal doctrine of the Church to a characteristically English mould. Without being either technically a "theologian" (which he more than once disclaimed) or possessing great powers of abstract speculation he has yet impressed our countrymen more deeply than any Catholic writer since the Reformation. Vast patristic learning, a mind balanced yet exquisitely subtle, a power of sustained psychological analysis, above all, an unique felicity of expression, besides deep religious earnestness and a most sensitive orthodoxy explain something of his secret. At the same time, though the glory of an Oxford now passed away, he had no illusions about the nature of English culture. He held that English literature rose with Protestantism and is permeated by it,¹ and his famous description of the "gentleman"² has a distinctly acid flavour. Moreover he was fully alive to the value of our seminary system; he regarded the rank and file of priests as being a sort of "militia", who must have the training, narrow from one point of view, which would ensure their being holy and efficient; he considered that their opportunities and requirements did not call even for the general culture suitable for laymen living in the world.³ A great intellectual revival has taken place within the Church since Newman's day, of which we now enjoy the fruits; but it clearly can only be in some such spirit as his that the problem of the reconciliation of Catholicism and English culture must be approached.

ÆLRED GRAHAM, O.S.B.

¹ *Present Position of Catholics*, 1851 (1908), p. 68-72.

² *Idea of a University*, VIII, 10.

³ *Ward, Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman*, vol. 1., p. 513.

HOMILETICS

Septuagesima Sunday

MAN has been created to know God, love Him and serve Him; in other words, to attain personal holiness. "I am the Lord your God. Be holy because I am holy" (Levit. xi, 44). Man must, of course, play his part in the world, contributing in his place and measure by the labour of brain or hand to the peace and prosperity of civilized society. Therein lies his temporal task. Beyond and above it he has an eternal task, because he has an immortal soul, endowed by grace with the beginnings of eternal life; and that eternal task is the working out of his immortal destiny, the bringing to fruition of the life of grace which is in him, the increasing sanctification of himself. Therein lies the full purpose and meaning of his existence. "According to him that hath called you, who is holy, be you also in all manner of conversation (i.e. in all your behaviour) holy: because it is written: you shall be holy, for I am holy" (I Peter i, 15, 16).

Indeed it is not only above and beyond his temporal task that man must sanctify himself. He must sanctify himself also through all that he does, through his work for this world no less than through what he does directly for the next. His life must be made into a beautiful unity, focused on God in everything. "All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. iii, 17).

This doctrine of personal holiness could be, if one wished, the common theme of the Sundays of this month; because the Epistles all deal with the subject under various fundamental aspects and when taken together set out a fairly complete treatment of the cardinal elements of perfection.

Today's Epistle in its earlier part deals with what we may call the negative means of sanctification, the work we must do with the help of grace to dispose ourselves for holiness. That work is asceticism, the consistent practice of mortification and detachment. Using the illustration of the Isthmian Games, a triennial event naturally very popular with the Corinthians, St. Paul indicates what should be the line of conduct of a Christian. If a runner will refrain himself from all things in order to win the prize of the Games—and only one can win that fading prize—how much more should the Christian be prepared to refrain himself for the sake of the unfading crown of glory, which not one only but all may win who run worthily and mightily in the race of life. But for our purpose the point is that in one race and in the other self-restraint is the due and necessary means to the attainment of the end proposed. Only by restraint does one become efficient and free, sound and fit.

What, then, must we do? First of all we must train our intellectual vision to see life in its true proportions. We must, in St. Peter's phrase (I Peter ii, 11), realize that we are here as strangers and pilgrims. We constantly affirm, in the "Hail, holy Queen" for example, that we are exiles. That is no mere pious phrase for our lips to utter unheedingly or our hearts to glean a little consolation from when we are feeling depressed. It is a great truth; and therefore should have a living force within us as a fully

accepted judgement of the mind, as a dynamic thought which works upon our whole being and carries away with it the imagination and the appetites. Ideas need some pondering over, weighing and analysing before they become thus part of ourselves. We must, then, begin by taking earnest thought as to our true relation to this world, with the aim of really convincing ourselves that here we have no lasting city. God has been helping us in these days to get this point of view, which is His view; for the war has shown us the emptiness, insufficiency or uselessness of many things which we prized.

Secondly, we must behave as strangers and pilgrims. There precisely we practise that abstinence which St. Paul inculcates. We must begin to dispense with everything which will prevent or even deflect the straight course of our life to Heaven. Mortal sin we must resolutely cut out. Otherwise we turn our backs on our goal. Deliberate venial sin, too, we must shun; because venial sin is a definite dallying on the way with a consequent lack of proper interest in the things of God. Further, even in the use of things which are lawful we must be sparing and temperate; pruning like wise gardeners in order that the Divine life within us may flow free and full. Lastly we must take up our daily cross. It is the Lord's command: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me" (Luke ix, 23).

All this is that spiritual purgation without which there is no holiness. It is the beginning of sanctity, this turning away from earth to God; but not the beginning only, but the middle way and the end.

Sexagesima Sunday

Last week we considered the basic disposition for all holiness, namely the emptying of self by mortification and detachment. This week we see the source of our holiness, the living power of Christ. It is shown us in the vivid story of St. Paul's life. The great apostle is brought before us, glorious in his activity and sufferings for Christ and in the spiritual favours He receives from Him; but, for all his glory, weak as a man, tried, and infirm in health ("the angel of Satan" buffeting him), and yet in his very weaknesses made powerful by the grace of Christ. St. Paul himself interprets the meaning and indicates the origin of everything in his life in the closing phrase of the Epistle: "that the power of Christ may dwell in me".

St. Paul had a unique vocation, to be a vessel of election, the apostle of the Gentiles. What a life was his, overflowing with activity and suffering! We shall never be called upon to display such spiritual energy or to endure such trials from outside agents and within our own nature. We can take it that our life is meant to be humdrum, our status in the world lowly, and our known influence on the trend of human affairs apparently insignificant. The routine lot of man will be ours; in any case a glorious lot, since it is a sharing in the simplicity and ordinariness of the home life of the Holy Family of Nazareth. The truth for us to realize is that our position in life does not matter, provided God is in it. However lowly our status, it can and should be made supremely holy. It is not the work we do which matters, but the love of God with which we do it. St. Paul himself is our

authority for this : "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal," etc. (I Cor. xiii, 1). "In the evening of life," wrote St. John of the Cross, "we shall all be judged by love." And for the consolation of the lowliest St. Teresa said : "God is found among the pots and pipkins."

There is, then, no holiness except through the power of Christ working within us. It is grace which sanctifies, and grace is His gift. "I am the vine : you the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit : for without me you can do nothing" (John xv, 5). St. Paul is full of this doctrine (cf., for instance, Eph. iii, 14-19 ; Eph. iv).

Since Our Lord has given us by His grace the wherewithal of holiness and is continually trying by His actual graces to foster and increase our holiness, it is our part to correspond with His gifts. It means a constant and sustained effort to live a life of virtue after the pattern of Christ. St. Paul lists the virtues of the member of Christ in Ephesians iv (second part) and v. By thus striving to keep the commandments, we shall gradually put on the new man who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth (Eph. iv, 24) ; we shall work towards the ideal : "I live, now not I : but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii, 20.) Gradually our thoughts will become holy and spiritual, and our judgements of men and things formed after the pattern of God's judgement ; our wills will become more and more steeped in love of God and man ; our imaginations will be purified ; our senses and emotions brought under the control of grace ; our whole body will become holy as God's temple. To pray and strive for these things should be our aim ; Lent will give us a unique opportunity for that. If we wish to sum up the whole line of our conduct in one brief rule, that rule would be that we should try to see everything with Christ's eyes, that we should imagine Him placed in the varied circumstances of our life and then act as He would act.

Frequent confession will be a special means of getting the spirit of Christ. For each confession is a renewal of purpose. It is a setting before ourselves of the ideal which we ought to be. And on Christ's side it is a great channel of grace, countering sin and temptation and the evil roots of sin, all of which are or tend to be the specific enemies of our soul's best interests.

Frequent holy communion will be another special means, indeed the most important means of all. For there we make the closest contact possible with Our Lord's life-giving power. His spirit enters into us. His ideas take possession of the mind, His love begins to transfuse the will, His holiness spreads from within to every part of us. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me : and I in him . . . he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me" (John vi, 57, 58).

All this is that process of illumination by Christ which, along with purgation, is the abiding and increasing means of sanctification.

Quinquagesima Sunday

Hitherto we have considered two fundamental factors in the attainment of holiness : the disposing cause which is asceticism, and the efficient cause which is Christ. In today's beautiful Epistle St. Paul describes

the formal cause of holiness, that in which it essentially consists, namely charity. Both negatively, by emphasizing that various seemingly virtuous activities are valueless without charity, and positively, by showing how charity issues in all kinds of virtue, St. Paul makes it abundantly clear that this, the greatest of the theological virtues and the only one which abides from this world to the next, is the pith and marrow and the very soul of sanctity (cf. also Rom. xiii, 9, 10).

It is Our Lord's own teaching: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets" (Matt. xxii, 37-40. Cf. Deut. vi, 5, etc., where the commandment is put very beautifully and effectively).

Hence sanctity does not consist in extraordinary favours from God. Such favours are indeed not uncommon in the lives of the saints: but it was not by them that they became saints. There have been saints of whom no miracle is recorded; St. John the Baptist, for example. St. Paul carefully distinguishes for us between extraordinary favours and the essential virtue of sanctity. In I Cor. xii he recounts the extraordinary manifestations of the Holy Spirit which were common among the early Christians, and ends: "But be zealous for the better gifts. And I shew unto you yet a more excellent way." Thus he passes to the eulogy of charity which is today's Epistle.

Nor does sanctity consist essentially in strict asceticism. That, as we have seen, is a disposition for holiness; or again it may be its outcome. Nor is sanctity synonymous with almsgiving, sick-visiting, instructing the ignorant—in a word with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. They are indeed works of holiness, the effective love of one's neighbour. But they are not in themselves essential holiness, and it is possible to practise them and not be really holy. St. Paul himself says so: "If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor . . . and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

It is, then, on the love of God that we should concentrate in our spiritual life. We are told in the catechism that God has put us on this earth for three things, to know Him, love Him and serve Him. Of the three we should make love the central, dominant, all-embracing object. The knowledge of faith leads naturally to love; living faith is loving faith. And service naturally springs from love, as its effective outcome; friendship expresses itself in beneficence. To serve God will never be dull and hard, if we serve Him from love. Nor will service be looked upon as a negative thing, not doing this and not doing that. There will, of course, be much abstention even in things lawful; for true love demands a complete surrender of the heart to God. But the abstention will not be practised for its own sake, but as an indispensable means of loving God more and more.

Since love is the specific activity of the will, to love God will mean having one will with Him, conforming our thoughts, words and acts to what He would wish us to think, say and do. Friendship means "*idem velle, idem nolle*". God's Will is manifested in His commandments. We love Him if we keep them (John xiv, 15, 21); and the more perfectly we

keep them, the more we love Him. But over and above the commandments God's Will is manifested in true inspirations, calling a soul perhaps to religion. Such true inspirations should be listened to and followed. His Will is manifested also in the circumstances of our life, for no event is outside the scope of His Providence, which reaches from end to end mightily and orders all things sweetly. We should then see those circumstances, the people with whom we live, the things that happen to us as His Will for us, and use them or again accept them as He would wish. The ideal of the faithful soul is set by Our Lord who did always the things that pleased His Father (John viii, 29), whose meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, that He might perfect His work (John iv, 34).

The way of charity is the way of union with God, a continuously developing union which, aided by purgation and illumination, will issue in intimacy with our heavenly Father. We must never set limits to our love of God. God cannot be loved too much; and Our Lord has commanded us: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. v, 48).

First Sunday of Lent

We have been thinking of holiness during the last three Sundays. To-day St. Paul reminds us that now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation, the season beyond all others when we should try to sanctify ourselves, making full use of God's grace and no longer letting it go by unheeded.

Holy Church knows that the efforts of man easily flag; that the worldly and the material readily gain control over his will and affections. So, very wisely, she establishes days and seasons of special prayer and penance, to pull her children up sharp in their drift from God and to awaken again their sense of spiritual values. Lent is the greatest of these seasons, both in the length of time set aside for spiritual renewal and in the intensity of effort called for. In Lent the Church succeeds admirably in creating the atmosphere of mortification, so that men feel they must do something then, if they do little or nothing at other times.

Lent calls into operation, so to say, all the three cardinal elements of holiness of which we have spoken on the three previous Sundays. First of all, it is the season of asceticism, joined with prayer and almsgiving. We take the advice of St. Raphael to Tobias: "Prayer is good with fasting and alms: more than to lay up treasures of gold" (Tobias xii, 8). We try to put ourselves in the best dispositions for God's grace, turning from sin to Him with all our heart in fasting and mourning (Joel ii, 12). The more earnestly we can do this, the richer will be the blessings which God will bestow upon us and the more real and lasting will be our conversion.

Secondly, Lent is the season when we keep before the mind the Passion of Christ; Lent is a preparation for Holy Week and Easter. In meditating on the Passion we draw courage to mortify ourselves, realizing that we have the honour of being like Him, if, having joy set before us, we yet endure the cross. At the same time, through the ever-present Passion, we are in constant touch with the source of all our good, with that one oblation by which Christ has perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Heb. x, 14).

Thirdly, Lent is the season when our love of God is vigorously stimulated. "He loved me and delivered Himself for me" (Gal ii, 20) is the lesson of Calvary. That "greater" love spontaneously stirs our love in return. Christ, being lifted up from the earth, draws us to Himself. The Passion has been the book in which every saint has read of the surpassing love of God for him, and, reading, has been moved to love to the end the Son of God who has died for him.

The mysterious element of suffering [wrote Bishop Hedley (*Retreat, The Sufferings of Christ*)], with which Jesus willed to raise to a whiter heat the acts of His Sacred Heart, is also marvellously adapted to draw to Him the hearts of all men. There is a well-known phrase of St. Bonaventure — *Vulnera corda saxa vulnerant, mentes congelatas inflammantia*—"Wounds of Jesus, that pierce hard hearts and melt the frozen breast!" It is not only that His sufferings proclaim His love, but that the sight of suffering causes pity and compassion; and when once the heart is touched by pity, all the emotions of nature are stirred, to their depths and take part in making love and union easy. "Quaesivit nos infirmitate sua," says St. Augustine. He would win us by His weakness.

So that we may see what mortification, the power of Christ, and the love of God should make us, St. Paul sets up before us in today's Epistle the ideal apostle and the ideal Christian. Let us look steadfastly on the picture as we enter upon Lent; and then look into our own hearts and note the contrast between the ideal and the reality; and then let us begin in earnest to try to reproduce within us, line by line, the lineaments of the ideal.

J. CARTMELL.

NOTES ON RECENT WORK

I. HOLY SCRIPTURE

BEFORE attempting an estimate of some recent specialized works on Holy Scripture, it may be useful to refer, quite briefly, to one or two books of a more general character which either contain quotations from the Bible or have some pages on the Bible's influence, more particularly its influence by means of the English versions. The first of these books is Mr. George Sampson's potted edition of a fourteen-volume original, and is entitled *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*. This is not the place to dilate upon its many good qualities and its occasional weaknesses and omissions. It has, as might indeed be expected, a little about the Wicliffite version, rather more about Tindale and the later sixteenth-century Protestant renderings, three pages of excellent pemmican on the Authorized Version of 1611, and nothing at all about the Catholic versions of the reformation and post-reformation periods. Readers of the excellent introduction by Dom Roger Hudleston to his edition of the Rheims Version of 1582 in the "Orchard Series" may, however, be reminded of the 2,803 passages "in which the Rheims and Authorized Versions present readings that are either identical or strikingly similar, while they are different from those of all the earlier English versions" (Hudleston, p. xxvii), and will conclude that to praise the Authorized Version is, in very many instances, to acknowledge the outstanding merits of its much pillaged source, the

noble translation produced by the exiled professors at Rheims. Apropos of St. Jerome, it is inexact to state (p. 179) that he was "the author, though he called himself the reviser, of the Latin Vulgate". Reference to almost any of the numerous works on the Vulgate might have convinced Mr. Sampson that the question cannot be simplified in this way.

The other work to be mentioned is *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, a welcome addition to a class of book already represented by Bartlett, Gurney Benham and Stevenson, which devotes some thirty out of nearly six hundred pages of text to quotations from the Bible. It might be objected that Shakespeare with twice as many pages was regarded by the compilers as having twice the importance of Holy Scripture, but it is only fair to remember that this dictionary, unlike some of its predecessors, is intended to be a record of such quotations as already exist in the memories of well-read people; it is not an attempt to dictate to the public what is in itself memorable. Those who possess and constantly refer to Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Bible* might be tempted to contrast its splendid fullness with the new dictionary's allotment of only five per cent of its space to the Bible, but the contrast would be unreasonable. On the other hand, the quotations from the Vulgate, which form part of the twenty pages assigned to Latin authors, do not err on the side of being too numerous or too long. There are exactly four of them, and they are: *Fiat lux*; *Dominus illuminatio mea* (an Oxford press could scarcely omit that one!); *Quo vadis?*; and *Ecce homo*. This exceedingly short measure may be aligned with Mr. Sampson's remark that the Vulgate "remained for long the standard version universally used by learned men" (p. 179).

In recent years many attempts have been made to popularize the reading of the Bible, with special reference to those readers who find the Old Testament to be, in the words of a great Hebraist, the late Professor A. B. Davidson, "that most unintelligible of books".¹ Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in the ninth lecture of his delightful book *On the Art of Reading* has given a mordant description of the unnecessary difficulties created for readers by a bad typographical tradition—the custom of printing all poetry as prose and of breaking up all paragraphs into separate verses, the quasi-diabolical invention of the double-column "with a marginal gutter on each side, each gutter pouring down an inky flow of references and cross references", and so forth. As long ago as 1895 the American professor R. G. Moulton edited *The Modern Readers' Bible* in which he abolished the double column, printed poetry in verse-lines, and (a much more dubious benefit) rearranged the order of the books. There have been many other ventures of the kind since that time. They include a number of shortened Bibles such as *The Bible designed to be read as literature*, the *Cambridge Shorter Bible*, and Mgr. Knox's well-known selection. For non-Catholic editors one of the problems to be faced has been the choice of translation. Should they print A.V., R.V., or some combination of the two? The first of the three volumes just mentioned adopts the principle of using the Authorized Version for most of the books; the exceptions are Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and the Canticle of Canticles, where the text of the Revised Version is employed.

¹ Quoted by Dr. J. Skinner in an appreciation of his old master. Cf. *The Expository Times*, Vol. XIII, p. 250.

So much should be said about the past. In the present year a fine volume entitled *The Bible for Today* has been produced by the Oxford University Press under the editorship of Mr. John Sterling.¹ Its aim, as expressed by its editor, is "to present the Bible as the divine revelation for our own times and to present it as news; news of God for the men and women of this generation". The translation used throughout is the Authorized Version, and there is a reversion to the double column, but in most other respects the edition is singularly fresh and original.² Much use is made of introductory summaries, headlines and footnotes; the printing is in paragraphs and the indications of chapter and verse are set out only at the head of the page; an effort is made to give the books of Holy Scripture a more modern setting, since it is claimed that: "Viewed without its local colour, the Bible is neither oriental nor ancient." The process of modernization is seen very clearly in the two hundred illustrations, line-drawings in black and white by Rowland Hilder and other artists, which certainly beautify many of the pages, and are perhaps an aid to interpretation. Many of these drawings are quite unmodern studies in pastoral scenery, still life and other harvests of a quiet eye; elsewhere, the life of great modern cities is illustrated, and microphones, printing-presses and giant passenger-planes are made to serve the purposes of exegesis. The notes are, in general, short and simply expressed, since, in the editor's opinion, "the ordinary reader wants finger-posts rather than footnotes", and in the titles, cross-headings, and introductory matter he will find finger-posts in abundance. There is an attractiveness about this edition which is not to be explained merely in terms of the beauty of its production, though it is true that the typography and binding are exquisite of their kind. However much one may disagree with the editor's critical opinions it must be acknowledged that belief in a divine revelation, in the story of that revelation as it is made known in the "Divine Library", and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are apparent in the loving care that has been bestowed upon this book. It may be hoped that in future editions some attempt may be made to bring the price a little nearer the pockets of those for whom the work is primarily intended.

Miss Beryl Smalley, a Catholic Fellow of St. Hilda's College, Oxford, has written a really notable book on *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*,³ a book which is itself a study of what is "probably the most neglected aspect of mediaeval thought". There is a lamentable contrast between the extreme importance attached by the men of the Middle Ages to the study of Holy Scripture, since "Bible study represented the highest branch of learning" (p. 9), and the widespread neglect, even in our own day, of most of the scriptural writings of mediaeval authorities. As recently as 1938 Canon Coppens of Louvain, a scholar of truly encyclopædic learning, was able to dismiss mediaeval exegesis in a single sentence: "Le moyen âge fut

¹ Oxford University Press, 1941. Pp. xv + 1255. Price 21s. There are also more expensive editions on India paper and in leather bindings.

² The complete omission of the Old Testament deuterocanonical books is yet another instance of regression. Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are frequently printed nowadays even by Protestant editors.

³ Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1941. Pp. xvi + 295. Price 17s. 6d.

une période de décadence pour l'étude de la Bible."¹ Nor is it at all easy for a lover of the Middle Ages, however well read in other branches of mediaeval studies, to make good the deficiency. It would be hard to think of any subject of living interest in which the only text-books were nearly three hundred years old, but this appears to be the case with mediaeval exegesis, for which the classic authority is still Richard Simon, whose *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* and *Histoire critique des principaux commentateurs du Nouveau Testament* were published respectively in 1678 and 1693. Apart from this slight drawback, there are, in Miss Smalley's view, two further reasons for the neglect of the subject, first, the labour implied, since much of the material is not exegetical in any strict sense;² secondly, the question that every historian who is a writer must face, whether the results of the enterprise would justify the labour expended.³

Miss Smalley's answer is that the study is, in fact, worth while for any historian interested in the workings of mediaeval minds. The purpose of her study is clearly delimited. "This book is not a history of biblical scholarship in the middle ages, which I am not competent to write. I only mean to show that such a history ought to be written and to clear the ground, in order that such a history may be written some day" (p. 13). She is not directly concerned with the laity's understanding of their Bible; she is writing of circles where the Bible was studied professionally, that is to say in Latin. The first chapter is an all too short account of the patristic tradition of Biblical study, more particularly the contrast of "the letter and the spirit", i.e. the *sensus literalis* and the *sensus spiritualis*, and the patristic conception of Scripture as *lectio divina*. A second chapter deals with monastic and cathedral schools under the sub-headings of the Carolingian revival, the development of the *glossa ordinaria* (in connection with which the importance of the school of Laon is appropriately stressed), and the *quaestio* as an instrument of exegesis. Chapters III and IV study the work of the Victorines, whose great tradition begins in 1110 with the foundation of the Abbey of St. Victor in Paris, and whose increasing interest in the literal sense and *hebraica veritas* are duly noted. Chapter V has as its main topic the work of three scholars belonging to three overlapping generations, namely, Peter Comestor (*d. circ.* 1169), Peter the Chanter (*d.* 1197) and Stephen Langton (*d.* 1228). A final chapter on the scriptural work of the Friars is a fitting completion of a scholarly work. Perhaps the most striking chapter is the one concerned with that great and hitherto almost unknown figure, Andrew of St. Victor, an account of whose life at Paris and later as Abbot of Wigmore forms an introduction to sections on his exegetical work, Jewish sources, and relations with Jewish scholars. Students of scholastic Latin, no less than exegetes, will be delighted to have in an appendix to chapter IV so many excellent specimens from Andrew's highly individual commentaries. This admirable study can only be regarded as a

¹ *L'Histoire critique de l'Ancien Testament*, Tournai and Paris, 1938, p. 6. Cf. CLERGY REVIEW, Vol. XVII, pp. 161-2.

² An instance cited is the treatise *Apologia de Barbis* by Burchardus de Bellevaux, "sermons to Cistercian lay brothers which take the form of moralizing every passage of Scripture where beards are mentioned and include advice to the brothers on the hygiene of their own beards".

³ The extraordinary badness of most of the texts has a bearing upon both the reasons just stated.

raegustatio. Sooner or later Miss Smalley will be compelled to write that fully documented and reasonably complete history of mediaeval biblical studies for which her present monograph is so outstanding a preparation.

Mr. Eric Partridge, author of many philological works, including an immense *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (most suitably described by one reviewer as "a veritable Madame Tussaud's of the vulgar language"), has now added to them *A New Testament Word-Book: A Glossary*,¹ which, though it will be of most service to those who use the standard Protestant Bibles, will also be of use to readers of the Catholic versions. Thus it is rightly pointed out that "the first and the second *ward*" in Acts xii, 10, a rendering common to both Catholic and Protestant versions, should be "guard, i.e. a body or company of guards or watchmen, not, as Wright admits, as an alternative, a prison". It may seem small praise for a useful and erudite book to say that its chief attraction is to be found in its explanations of obsolete words and phrases. Here Mr. Partridge's skill in investigating derivations has full play. So, apropos of "sitting at meat" in Matt. ix, 10, we are told three facts, only one of which is common knowledge, namely that the sense is to be at table, i. e. to be eating a meal; that the phrase, dating from c. 14 was common in c. 16-18, and then became archaic; and that the elaboration "at meat and meal" has long been obsolete. The word-book is less successful as a precise guide to theological terms, and on the side of Greek philology, some well-known authors (for example, the excellent *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* by Abbott Smith) appear to have been overlooked, though full use is made of Dr. Couer's *Pocket Lexicon*.

JOHN M. T. BARTON.

II. HISTORY

Several important historical books have been published since the last appearance of these notes. Mr. Trevor Jalland has produced in *The Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* a competent, exhaustive and learned study of the first of the Popes to be given the title Great.² Beginning with a brief sketch of the condition of the Roman Empire in the fifth century the author combines the chronological and analytical methods in an examination of the whole life of the Pope, devoting, as is right, a great part of his space to the relations of St. Leo with the Eastern Church, his doctrinal guidance in the Eutychian controversy, and the triumph at Chalcedon in 451. Following a general survey of his reign, the author goes on to study aspects of Leo's work with regard to worship and liturgy, his preaching and moral teaching, and his work as a theologian. In all these chapters the full apparatus of academic scholarship appears in support of the text, which is rich in long quotations from the Pope's letters and sermons. From these pages a just portrait of St. Leo stands out. He was not an original or speculative thinker, and his bent was in the direction of order and administration rather than of abstraction and theory; but he was inflexible in upholding principle and tradition. He has been called the first real formulator

¹ London, Routledge, 1940. Pp. xii + 215. Price 7s. 6d.

² Demy 8vo., pp. viii-542. Published for the Church Historical Society by the P.C.K., 21s.

of the truly Petrine claim of the Roman Church to supreme doctrinal authority, and Mr. Jalland, while writing with great fairness and studious objectivity, gives the impression that he agrees with the suggestion that Leo was in fact, though possibly unconsciously, helping in the process of "rewriting history in which the importance of St. Paul is gradually forgotten while his fellow Apostle becomes the central and unique figure on the Roman canvas". Mr. Jalland deals in an Additional Note with the evolution of the Petrine Privileges, and, if there are details in the argument which might be called in question, the summing up is very fair. He deals similarly in a just and cautious manner with the question of St. Peter's stay in Rome.

What seems to me to be a notable failing in the book is the fact that it is only in the concluding pages that the author touches on St. Leo's conception of the nature of the Church. Yet this is surely a necessary preliminary to, and background for, an understanding of his teaching on the doctrinal authority of the See of Rome. Leo was not a great theologian (though there is some fine popular theology in his sermons), he knew no Greek, and had apparently read very little of the earlier Christian writers. Yet his whole outlook was dominated by two ideas—that of the ancient tradition, the *norma vetustatis*, and that of the essential unity of the Church, the *Sponsa unus viri Christi*. Against such a background his insistence on unity, on concord, and on the Petrine centre of unity are more justly situated than in Mr. Jalland's otherwise valuable, copious and painstaking work.

Another work deserving serious attention is *Tudor Cornwall*, by Mr. A. L. Rowse.¹ This is exactly the sort of study of the Reformation period that we have long required, a need supplied in some measure by Bishop Mathew's book, *The Celtic People and Renaissance Europe*, but otherwise inadequately dealt with. Mr. Rowse describes his book in a sub-title as a Portrait of a Society, and in his choice of his native Cornwall he has been able to give a very full, detailed, interesting and often absorbing picture of a single, and in many ways a complete whole; for Cornwall was a unity outside the main tradition of English history, affected suddenly by the economic changes and the new overseas adventures rather than by other influences, and dragged, unwilling at first, and then in mercenary fashion, into the full current of the Reformation. Mr. Rowse's method depends on the careful amassing of detail, the exact recording of figures and the careful building up of a picture, based not on generalization but on accumulation. He does his work admirably, and the chapters which deal with the monasteries, their dissolution, the progress of the Reformation, the recusants, and the final composition of society at the end of the Elizabethan era provide Catholic students with a wealth of new material, with a number of new lines of thought, some perhaps disagreeable, and with a few disputable propositions. On the dissolution of the monasteries Mr. Rowse's evidence supports the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Geoffrey Baskerville, though without the latter's exasperating flippancy. "There is not the slightest doubt," he concludes, "that the monastic heads were extremely well-treated by the government; as for the monks, it was open to many of them to take livings and serve the Church much more usefully than they had done." The last words of that sentence are perhaps the best revelation of the author's mind, and of his approach to

¹ Demy 8vo. pp. 462, with 8 illustrations and 4 maps. Jonathan Cape. 1885.

the question of religion. His facts are accurate, the errors of detail are few, surprisingly so in the vast amount of evidence he brings forward, yet he conceives religion not in terms of transcendental values but in function of economic or cultural progress. If the framework of religion no longer fits the age, then that framework must be broken. Mr. Rowse realizes much of what monastic life really stood for, that its essential aim was the worship of God by personal holiness and prayer for others. But his main interest in the monasteries is concerned with their place in economic society, and his main approval of their dissolution is that they were no longer of use, but were a hindrance to what is considered to be progress towards a more individualist and admittedly a more secular conception of life. Yet this work will have a salutary influence in correcting views of the fading of monasticism in "a Gasquet-tinted sunset", which are still held by many Catholics as tenaciously as though they were dogmas of faith. On the other hand Mr. Rowse is under no delusions as to the driving power behind so much of the reforming movement—the spur of greed which goaded men to sell even the faith of their descendants for the sake of land and gain. Sir Richard Grenville is one of these jackals after loot, and his letter to Cromwell one among many of the time. He begged for a share in the spoil of the monasteries. "Then," continues Mr. Rowse, "follows the most revealing passage, which might have been taken as their text by the government, so well does it describe the motives to which they appealed, and on which they relied in carrying out their revolutionary policy. *That his heirs may be of the same mind for their own profit*, he would gladly buy some of the suppressed lands in these parts and would find the King sureties for payment of his money and would sell part of his inheritance to pay the rest; a not over-delicate way of putting that he wanted them as a gift. But could the fundamental appeal of the Dissolution to cupidity and class-interest have been more expressively put?" As Professor J. E. Neale has put it in an unforgettable phrase, "The Reformation had become a great vested interest." And the tragedy was that it became a vested interest through the defection and greed of men who were still nominal Catholics.

It is not altogether fantastic to link up the tragedy of the Reformation with the more urgent tragedy of contemporary Europe, and indeed of the whole world. The disintegration which began at the Reformation has reached full achievement in the modern pagan totalitarian state. This is one of the themes, differently emphasized, running through two important though very dissimilar books. *The Heresy of National Socialism* is a small but very compact book, stamped with the profound insight and penetrating thought of its author, and an intensely apostolic spirit.¹ It is one of the best and I believe most devastating analyses of the evil of Nazidom that I know—best because it does not wildly exaggerate, most devastating because its principles of criticism are so sound. The basis of the National Socialist philosophy is an heretical view of man, and consequently of all man's duties. The racial ideal is an heretical ideal, stultifying the Incarnation and denying the universality of the Redemption. Its end is sheer paganism, making the man of the perfect race a god unto himself. The centre of the new idolatry is the Fuehrer himself. Miss Marinoff's chapter on National Socialist

¹ By Irene Marinoff. *Present Problems Series*, edited by the Archbishop of Liverpool. Crown 8vo, pp. 159. Burns Oates. Paper covers, 3s.; cloth boards, 4s. 6d.

education shows convincingly not only the thorough method in which the de-Christianizing of German youth has been carried out by the Nazi party, but explains how the whole conception of education is built up round the ideal of national pride and the fashioning of the "perfect Aryan", the man for whom presence of mind, self-assurance and readiness in action are of far greater importance than the faded Christian ideals of truth, modesty and charity. The same theme is taken up in a more personal approach and on a much wider canvas in F. W. Foerster's *Europe and the German Question*.¹ This is a bigger and more diffuse book than Miss Marinoff's, based on an historical approach to the question of the place Germany should occupy in Europe. It requires careful and critical reading, and raises a number of debatable points. The author's main thesis is that Prussianism has debauched the German people, that the ideal of military domination and national ascendancy, especially with regard to the East, has turned Germany from her true destiny, which was to serve as a link between East and West, and to be "a supernational reality entrusted with the heritage of Roman universalism purified, baptized and enlarged by Christianity with all the responsibilities attached to it". If there is much in such a thesis which may be questioned, there is no doubt that the author, following lines similar to Miss Marinoff's, is right in stressing the fact that the present struggle is the external manifestation of a vastly more important spiritual struggle, the struggle for the soul of the German people by a philosophy of life which is utterly and essentially opposed to Christianity—"the greatest and most unrestrained revolt of the vital force in man's nature known to history". While Miss Marinoff writes soberly, and even with a sense of pessimism, Herr Foerster sees some reason for thanksgiving at the present time, and speaks confidently of spiritual and religious revival in the future. We should be grateful, he urges, for the symptoms of the deadly evil which are now so clear, for the canker in Germany is a disease of the whole world. "To the whole of civilized mankind today the question is addressed which St. Ignatius asked his exercitants: 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? Choose between heaven and hell.' The German eruption makes the choice easier. It compels humanity to face without possibility of evasion a logic of which it had not dreamed." And it compels every Catholic to ask himself what part he intends to play in the titanic spiritual struggle which overlies the earthly battlefield and the clash of arms.

ANDREW BECK, A.A.

¹ Demy 8vo, pp. xviii-474. George Allen & Unwin. 16s.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CRIMEN—PROMISE OF MARRIAGE

Since from canon 1017 the promise of marriage lacks all juridical effect unless it is drawn up in canonical form, does it not follow that the impediment of Crime does not arise unless the promise of marriage is exactly as described in canon 1017? (W.)

REPLY

Canon 1017, §1: *Matrimonii promissio sive unilaterialis, sive bilateralis, irrita est pro utroque foro, nisi facta fuerit per scripturam subsignatam a partibus et vel a parrocho aut loci Ordinario, vel a duobus saltem testibus.*

Canon 1075.1: *Valide contrahere nequeunt matrimonium: Qui perdurante eodem legitimo matrimonio, adulterium inter se consummarunt et fidem sibi mutuo dederunt de matrimonio ineundo vel ipsum matrimonium, etiam per civilem tantum actum, attentarunt.*

The necessity of a canonical form for a valid promise of marriage did not arise till *Ne Temere*, 19 April, 1908, and the legislation of that decree is contained in canon 1017, §1. Consequently, the doubt we are asked to solve could only have arisen since *Ne Temere*, but it was not, it appears, till Boudinhon wrote on the subject in *Jus Pontificium*, 1931, XI, p. 36, that any canonist adverted to the point. He defended the view that for the impediment of canon 1075.1 it is necessary to have a formal engagement to marry, or the attempt at such, as described in canon 1017, §1. His argument is that a private, informal marriage contract—such as was recognized to be valid before the Tridentine *Tametsi* decree—is insufficient for the impediment of crimen in the latter part of canon 1075.1: there is required at least the attempt to make a formal contract, be it merely a civil one. Similarly an informal promise of marriage—recognized as valid before *Ne Temere*—must now be reckoned insufficient for the impediment of crimen which arises from a promise: there is required an attempt, at least, to enter upon a formal betrothment as described in canon 1017, §1. Before the Council of Trent no form was necessary for consent whether *de praesenti* (marriage) or *de futuro* (betrothment). A canonical form for marriage was introduced by *Tametsi*, and for betrothment by *Ne Temere*; therefore, since *Ne Temere*, the impediment of crimen is not constituted by a private informal engagement to marry.

There are obvious difficulties against this view, but we have not found any writer who discusses them adequately: the criticism of Boudinhon's view in *Periodica*, 1932, XXI, p. 237, does not, we think, fairly meet the historical argument. What we have found is that every canonist, whether aware or not of Boudinhon's point, simply takes it for granted that by

"fidem sibi mutuo dederunt" in canon 1075.1 is not meant "per scripturam subsignatam", etc., as in canon 1017, §1. The most authoritative of these commentators is Gasparri, writing the year after Boudinhon, in *De Matrimonio*, I, §674, f. He does not mention him by name but he could hardly be unaware of the view propounded by his friend,¹ which he expressly rejects: "Tandem ad impedimentum inducendum sufficit *privata* matrimonii promissio et non requiritur *sponsalitia* ad normam can. 1017. . . ."

Similarly, Chrétien, *De Matrimonio* (1937), §168: ". . . nec necesse est, ut singulariter opinatur Boudinhon, *fidem* intelligi de sponsalibus." Cf. also, Vermeersch-Creusen, *Epitome* (1934), §351; Cappello: *De Matrimonio*, 1939, §482: "opinio quae tenet . . . requiri promissionem factam ad normam can. 1017 iuridico fundamento destituitur."

The manualists, generally speaking, are of the same mind, but occasionally they express it with far less assurance than some of the above writers, e.g. Noldin, *De Sacramentis*, III, §581: "Quaestio, num adsit impedimentum, si in promissione non servantur condiciones per decretum *Ne Temere* praescriptae, eo vel magis affirmanda videtur, quod *Codex* ad contrahendum impedimentum non exigit sponsalia sed simplicem promissionem matrimonii."

Faced with so great a cloud of witnesses we have no option but to reject Boudinhon's interpretation. That the Holy See is accustomed to issue dispensations from this impediment, even when the promise of marriage is private and informal, is a strong point against it; but we cannot see any great value in the objection that, if Boudinhon is correct, the first degree of the impediment would practically vanish from the list. This, it would seem, is rather a point in its favour. The history of impediments records their gradual reduction from the Council of Trent onwards, and seeing that the *Congregation of the Sacraments* has recently lamented the number of invalid marriages arising from occult impediments being undetected,² it would be a step in the right direction if the first degree of crimen, always difficult to detect and usually quite unsuspected by the parties themselves, could be quietly removed by adopting a stricter interpretation of the law, as Boudinhon suggests.

E. J. M.

RESERVATIONS IN INTERNMENT CAMPS

Does the jurisdiction for confessions, recently conceded by the Sacred Penitentiary to all priests in internment camps (CLERGY REVIEW, 1941, XXI, p. 54), include the power to absolve from cases reserved to the Ordinary? (W. P.)

¹ Cf. Doheny, *Canonical Procedure in Matrimonial Cases*, p. 454, n. 55.

² 29 June, 1941, n. 5 "immo hoc potissimum quod rarius innotescere solet (voti criminis etc.)" Cf. CLERGY REVIEW, 1941, XXI, p. 199.

REPLY

i. The question is an interesting one for those who are attracted rather than repelled by the complicated subject of reservations. From the purely *speculative* point of view, it is our opinion that the jurisdiction enjoyed by priests in concentration camps is subject to all the limitations accompanying jurisdiction which is obtained in any other way by the common law: that is to say, they have *per se* no jurisdiction over the censures reserved in the Code to Ordinaries, and *a fortiori* they have none over those reserved in the Code to the Holy See.

But, in addition to these reservations in the common law, local Ordinaries may themselves reserve cases to their own tribunal both *propter peccatum* (canon 893 seq.) and *propter censuram* (canon 2245 seq.); there may also be cases reserved to the Ordinary by Provincial law in the district where the concentration camp is situated. It is our opinion that the camp confessors enjoy jurisdiction over all these cases.

ii. Whether the above opinion is speculatively correct or not, it will be found in *practice* that the camp confessor enjoys the power of absolving validly in the internal forum of conscience practically any case which is brought to his tribunal. For the absolution of all censures *l.s.* he can use canon 2254, §1, and if recourse to the appropriate superior within a month is morally impossible, §3 of the same canon releases the penitent from this obligation. Similarly, for the absolution of reservations *propter peccatum*, canon 900, §2, declares that reservation ceases whenever the superior cannot be reached without grave inconvenience—which would usually be the case. If the confessor does not know which cases are withdrawn from his jurisdiction, and having no means of finding out absolves in ignorance, the absolution of a reservation *propter peccatum* is valid but *indirect* and the penitent is theoretically under the obligation of presenting it again, when the occasion offers, for direct absolution; in similar circumstances the confessor's absolution from reservations *propter censuram* is valid, except for reservations *ab homine* and those reserved to the Holy See *specialissimo modo* (canon 2247, §3). Moreover, from canon 209 jurisdiction is supplied by the Church "in errore communi aut in dubio positivo et probabili sive iuris sive facti".

iii. In spite of these liberal provisions of our modern canon law, all designed to make it possible for penitents to be absolved without needless delay, certain extremely unusual cases might arise which are not covered by them, e.g. a penitent "notoriously" under a declaratory sentence of excommunication. An unprivileged confessor cannot validly absolve him except in danger of death (canon 882); very likely this danger could be reckoned present owing to air-raids or other perils of modern warfare. If it is impossible, even with a most liberal interpretation, to discern any

danger of death, the confessor can do nothing more than assist the penitent to make a perfect act of contrition, pending recourse to the appropriate superior.

E. J. M.

CLERICAL DRESS

A priest belonging to a diocese where the cassock is not the usual outdoor dress is dwelling for a time in a foreign diocese where it certainly is. Is he bound to conform to the local usage and wear a cassock? If he is not bound, may he do so if he desires? (B.)

REPLY

Canon 136, §1: Omnes clerici decentem habitum ecclesiasticum, secundum legitimas locorum consuetudines et Ordinarii loci praescripta, deferent. . . .

Canon 13, §2: Legibus conditis pro peculiari territorio ii subiiciuntur pro quibus latae sunt quique ibidem domicilium vel quasi-domicilium habent et simul actu commorantur, firmo praescripto can. 14 (de peregrinis).

S. Congr. Concilii, 28 July, 1931. Cf. CLERGY REVIEW, 1931, II, p. 448: ". . . decentem habitum ecclesiasticum publice semper, non excepto tempore aestivarum vacationum, deferant, habitum scilicet, quem legitima consuetudo et Ordinarii loci praescriptum in propria regione ordini clericali congruentem agnoverint."

S. Congr. Consistorialis, 31 March, 1916. *Fontes*, n. 2093: Clericum a propria dioecesi in aliam migrantem posse ibi vestem dioecesis suae retinere, quamvis diversam ab ea quae in loco est praescripta, dummodo sit una ex duabus a Patribus Quebecensibus probata: idque usquedum domicilium vel quasi domicilium ibidem non ineat. Sicut in ieiunii et abstinentiae lege aliisque similibus fas est peregrinis loci usum sequi, ita pariter salvam esse cuilibet clerico potestatem se conformandi usibus loci ad quem transmigrat, quin ab Ordinario suo hac una de causa reprehendi vel puniri valeat.

A variety of usage is recognized in all these legal texts, particularly in the most recent one, *S. Congr. Concilii*, 28 July, 1931. The approved custom, and therefore the law, in most English-speaking countries, prescribes a form of clerical dress which, however it may vary in style and length, is certainly not a cassock. Cf. Dr. McReavy's proof of the point in this REVIEW, 1937, XIII, p. 82.

Owing to the existence of English together with French customs in various parts of Canada, the dispute which arose there was settled by *S. Congr. Consistorialis*, 28 July, 1931, but the directions given on that occasion, though primarily addressed to Canadian clerics, are based on principles

of the common law. It was on these principles that we gave it as our view in this journal, 1938, XV, p. 359, that a cleric reciting the breviary should conform to the calendar of the place where he has a diocesan quasi-domicile. By acquiring a quasi-domicile (canons 91, 92) in an alien diocese a cleric becomes subject to its laws, and is therefore bound to conform to the local usage in clerical dress. Accordingly, an English priest attending a University in France should wear a cassock; a French priest in similar circumstances in England should not.

From canon 92, §2, a quasi-domicile is acquired, "*commoratione . . . quae vel coniuncta sit cum animo ibi manendi saltem ad maiorem anni partem, si nihil inde avocet, vel sit reapse protracta ad maiorem anni partem*". Residence in a place without acquiring a quasi-domicile therein, in the case of a priest who has a quasi-domicile elsewhere, places him in the category of "*peregrini*" (canon 14, §1), concerning whom difficulties are always arising, since he is subject to those local laws "*quae ordini publico consulunt*". Fortunately, there is no great difficulty in the present question. Following the ruling given for Canada by the Consistorial Congregation in 1916, we may hold that the local regulations on the form of clerical dress do not normally affect public order. Therefore, on an analogy with other laws, a priest residing in an alien diocese for any reason, but not acquiring a quasi-domicile therein, may please himself and either retain the dress he wears at home or conform to that of the local clergy.

E. J. M.

WOMEN—UNCOVERED HEAD

Does a priest act rightly or not in refusing Holy Communion to women communicants with uncovered heads? (R.W.)

REPLY

1 Cor. xi, 13, 16. You yourselves judge: doth it become a woman to pray unto God uncovered? . . . But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the church of God.

Canon 1262: *Viri in ecclesia vel extra ecclesiam, dum sacris ritibus assistunt, nudo capite sint, nisi aliud ferant probati populorum mores aut peculiaria rerum adiuncta; mulieres autem, capite cooperto et modeste vestitae, maxime cum ad mensam Dominicam accedunt.*

(i) The law is clear and certain that women must receive Holy Communion with head covered. It was the custom in St. Paul's day, in itself a sufficient reason for the Apostolic injunction, even apart from the teaching of the whole passage in 1 Cor. xi, 1-15, which is a difficult text to interpret. Clearly, like any other positive law, a reasonable necessity excuses its

observance. Women often prefer to go about hatless nowadays, but this preference cannot be regarded as a sufficient reason in itself for not observing the law in so sacred a matter as receiving the Holy Eucharist, a rite which is carefully regulated by the Church in its smallest details. Accordingly, even in parts of the world like China, where the custom is foreign to the habits of the people, the Vicars Apostolic are directed to do their best to enforce the rule "sensim sine sensu",¹ and the *Congregation of Rites* directs that women assisting at sacred rites, "per fenestram (vulgo *Corello*) quae intus Ecclesiam, interiectis transennis, inspicit", must have their heads covered.²

A priest acts rightly in securing, by every lawful means, the observance of the law, e.g. by reproaching delinquents, or by explaining—if he feels equal to the task—the mind of St. Paul. The hatless brigade should bring with them a mantilla for use in church, as many do.

(ii) We do not know of any instance, but it is conceivable in some localities that the non-observance of the law is regarded generally as a most grave scandal, and local law may direct the clergy to refuse Holy Communion to women with uncovered heads.

Failing any such law or direction from the Ordinary, it is our opinion that a priest must not refuse Holy Communion to those who, even with no justifying reason of any kind, approach with uncovered heads. It will be seen from the wording of Canon 1262 that "capite cooperto" is a separate item from "modeste vestitae". With regard to women and girls immodestly attired we have the *Instruction of the Congregation of the Council*, 12 January, 1930, that they are to be refused Holy Communion. Cf. *CLERGY REVIEW*, 1938, XV, p. 545, where this Instruction is explained. But no matter how strongly one feels about the subject, the lack of any headgear obviously cannot be regarded as immodest, nor is there anything in the *Instruction* leading us to suppose that it can be construed as such. It is an extremely grievous affront for the faithful to be denied the Sacraments, and it is well merited by public sinners or by persons known to be excommunicated. Refusal is so grave a matter that the discipline must be reserved for those who are publicly known to be in a state of *mortal* sin.

The writers generally are reticent about the gravity of this law; they reserve their space, quite rightly, for discussing the serious matter of communicating in immodest attire. Two canonists, however, of undoubted authority, give us the assurance that the law binds *sub levi* only, and they do it rather neatly, and no doubt to the complete satisfaction of the devout sex, by viewing a hatless woman in exactly the same light as a skull-capped man.

Gasparri, *De Eucharistia* (1897), §1132: "Ceterum quae diximus de corporis ornatu in Ecclesia pro Missae adsistentia, a fortiori repetenda sunt pro sacra communione. . . . Proinde vir pileolum non gerat; quod tamen veniale peccatum non excedit et omni culpa vacat si rationabilis

¹ *Fontes*, n. 4903, ad. XV.

² N. 3402, ad. IV.

causa sit et absit scandalum. Id et de mulieribus, velatum caput non habentibus, repetendum est . . . sacerdos neminem exinde a sacra mensa repellere debet aut potest."

Cappello, *De Sacramentis* (1938), §519: "Vir nudo capite communicare debet. Quare pileolum gestare nequit; id tamen culpam venialem non excedit. . . . Quod et de mulieribus, velatum caput non habentibus, dicendum est."

E. J. M.

ROMAN DOCUMENTS

(i) SACRA CONGREGATIO CONCILII

CATANEN.

Iuris Eligendi Canonicos et Dignitates (A.A.S., 1941, XXXIII, p. 333).

Die 15 Iunii 1940

SPECIES FACTI.—Eugenius IV Bulla *Inter cetera* diei 31 Martii 1446 ecclesiam Beatae Mariae de Eleemosyna in civitate Catanensi in Collegiatam erexit, constantem tribus dignitatibus et undeviginti canonicatibus, quos et providit, quin de futuris provisionibus aliquid decerneret.

Duobus fere post annis Nicolaus V Bulla *Apostolicae* diei 15 Iulii 1448 duplici privilegio idipsum Capitulum ditavit, optionis nempe et iuris eligendi canonicos et dignitates, firmo iure Episcopi has electiones confirmandi.

Tandem Episcopus Catanensis anno 1753 quartam dignitatem erexit, cuius electionem Capitulo quoque attribuit. De hac dignitate nulla est quaestio, cum Capitulum ipsum sibi persuasum habeat eandem post Codicem Iuris Canonici esse Sanctae Sedi reservatam, quia in casu non habetur privilegium apostolicum, sed tantum concessio iuris, ab Episcopo Catanensi Capitulo facta, eligendi ad ipsam dignitatem.

Quod vero spectat ius eligendi ceteros canonicos aliasque tres dignitates, Capitulum contendit hoc ius etiam post promulgatum Codicem I. C. sibi competere, sive quia in casu res est de privilegio apostolico, quod vi canonis 4 eiusdem Codicis integrum manet, quippe quod non expresse revocatum sive quia Bulla Nicolai V *Apostolicae*, edita duobus annis post Bullam *Inter cetera* Eugenii IV, spectari debet uti istius perfectio et complementum, ac proinde privilegia in ea sancita, uti in actu foundationis apposita, censenda sunt.

Contradicente vero Dataria Apostolica, huiusmodi quaestio ab eadem huic Sacrae Congregationi dirimenda remissa est.

ANIMADVERSIONES.—In primis, quod attinet ad ius eligendi canonicos, res satis clara videtur attento praescripto canonis 403, vi cuius, exceptis dignitatibus, ad Episcopum pertinet omnia et singula beneficia et canonicatus in ecclesiis tum cathedralibus tum collegiatis conferre, revocato etiam quolibet contrario privilegio. Agitur in canone de libera collatione Episcopi, non autem de collatione necessaria, seu de institutione canonica quae ius eligendi et praesentandi praesupponit.

Quapropter iure Codicis in re de qua agitur abrogatum est ius speciale quod nititur consuetudine vel privilegio, et ius commune instauratur, quo collatio dignitatum exclusive Sedi Apostolicae reservatur ad normam canonum 396 §1 et 1435 §1, collatio autem canonicatum ad Episcopum pertinent ad normam canonum 403 et 1432. Quod pluries sanxit haec Sacra Congregatio, ita in *Barulen.* diei 10 Iunii 1922 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. XIV, pag. 459), in *Utinen.* diei 10 Februarii 1923 (*A.A.S.*, vol. XV, pag. 544), in *Nicosien.* diei 9 Iunii 1923 (*A.A.S.*, vol. XVI, pag. 432), et in *Ratisbonen.* diei 4 Martii 1933 (*A.A.S.*, vol. XXVII, pag. 341).

Incongruum enim videtur legislatorem ius eligendi canonicos Capitulis abstulisse, sed integrum eisdem canonicis servasse ius eligendi dignitates, quae sunt maioris momenti atque Sanctae Sedi reservatae, praesertim quia patet mentem legislatoris in subiecta materia fuisse Ecclesiae conferre omnimodam libertatem in collatione beneficiorum, salva tamen lege foundationis.

Immerito autem Capitulum censet haec privilegia ex lege foundationis repetenda esse, cum constet in casu Summos Pontifices non fundasse, sed tantum erexisse vel instituisse canonicatus et dignitates in memorata Collegiata Catanensi. Nec Bulla Nicolai V *Apostolicae* haberi potest uti perfectio et complementum Bullae *Inter caetera* Eugenii IV, cum hac Bulla Capitulum integre in suo esse fuerit constitutum, et subsequenti Bulla Pontifex Nicolaus V privilegia Capituli tantummodo ampliaverit et extenderit.

RESOLUTIO.—Proposito itaque in plenariis Comitibus diei 15 Iunii 1940 dubio: *An ius Capituli collegialis Beatae Mariae de Eleemosyna eligendi canonicos et dignitates sustineatur in casu*, Eñi Patres huius Sacrae Congregationis responderunt: *Negative*.

Quam resolutionem Ssñus Dominus noster Pius PP. XII in Audientia diei 18 eiusdem mensis Iunii, referente subscripto Secretario, approbare et confirmare dignatus est.

I. BRUNO, *Secretarius*.

Many will remember that, before the promulgation of the Code, the designation of priests to vacant canonries in England belonged to the Chapter when the vacancy occurred in certain months of the year. This was abrogated by Canon 403, as the above decision notes.

Every chapter consists of ordinary canonries and dignities, the latter being reserved to the Holy See. A dignitary used, in times past, to enjoy considerable jurisdiction under the title of Archdeacon, Archpriest,

Precentor, etc. It is now everywhere *qua* "dignity", merely a title of honour carrying with it precedence over the other members of the Chapter, and it is always reserved to the Holy See even though no emoluments are attached. (*Code Commission*, 1 July, 1922.) Only one "dignity" was given to our Chapters when they were erected in 1852—that of the Provost—"Praepositus", and as far as we know this is still the situation. The Canon Theologian and the Canon Penitentiary are not dignitaries.

E. J. M.

(ii) SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM

LEODIEN.

Beatificationis et Canonizationis Venerabilis Servae dei Mariae Teresiae Hæze, Fundatricis Congregationis Filiarum a Cruce (A.A.S., 1941, XXXIII, p. 336).

SUPER DUBIO

An constet de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe, Caritate tum in Deum, cum in proximum nec non de cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia, Fortitudine earumque adnexis in gradu heroico, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur.

"In hac vita, ait Augustinus, virtus non est, nisi diligere quod diligendum est. Id eligere prudentia; nullis inde averti molestiis, fortitudo est; nullis illecebris, temperantia est; nulla superbia, iustitia est. Quid autem eligamus, quod praecipue diligamus, nisi quo nihil melius invenimus? Hoc Deus est cui si, diligendo, aliquid vel praeponimus vel aequamus, nos ipsos diligere nescimus" (Ep. clv, 13).

Maria Teresia Hæze, utpote prudens, fortis, temperans et iusta, Deum elegit, quem praecipue diligeret, quo nil melius quit inveniri, cui nihil praeponendo vel aequando, heroicum caritatis, atque idcirco ceterarum virtutum, attigit gradum, ideoque seipsam perfecte diligere scivit.

Porro e piis genitoribus, anno 1782, Leodii, in Belgio, sub Februarii mensis finem, nata, in sacris baptismi aquis nomen Ioannae suscepit. Saeviente gallica seditione, difficile dictu est quanta, una cum familia, puella passa fuerit. Pater ad mortem quaesitus e patria civitate clam aufugere cum uxore est coactus. Non multo autem post, fugere iterum, seorsum a familia, eidem necesse fuit, atque in Germaniam se recipere, ubi supremum diem obiit.

Adolescentula, cum matre sororibusque Leodium vix reversa, totam se in pietatis caritatisque opera, praesertim erga pauperes, cum sorore Ferdinanda impendit.

Mortua autem matre, aliisque sororibus matrimonio iunctis, Ioanna, cum eadem sorore, plurimarum puellarum infelicem sortem miserata, privatum ludum constituit, in quo alumnae primis litterarum rudimentis

instruebantur, atque muliebribus operibus operam dabant, cum primis vero, quod magis est, christianae vitae imbuebantur praeceptis; magno cum earum parentum solatio, conciviumque utilitate qui, virtutum exempla ab eis excipientes, ad mores corrigendos atque ad christianam vitam sectandam sensim sine sensu suaviter impellebantur. Parochus, tanta bona, per easdem sorores parta, admiratus, Ioannam rogavit ut gratuita scholae, quam ipse pro pueris puellisque condere moliebatur, regimen assumeret, cui illa libenter quidem, sed magna rei familiaris iactura assensit. Res adeo feliciter procedebant, ut nonnullae puellae se eisdem adiungerent; sicque factum est, ut non modo in scholas, sed et in alia caritatis opera Ioanna, sodalesque incumbere valuissent. Hoc initium fuit Congregationis Filiarum a Cruce, quae a Leodiensi Episcopo una cum constitutionibus, die B. M. Virginis nativitati sacro anno Domini 1833, approbata fuit.

Fausto hoc die ipsa religiosas induit vestes, nomen Ioannae, ob impensam suam pietatem erga Beatam Virginem sanctamque Teresiam, in aliud Mariae Teresiae immutavit, atque perpetua nuncupavit vota. Institutum itaque, episcopali auctoritate firmatum, fines, a Venerabili Maria Teresia intentos, assequi coepit. Eapropter, praeter scholas egenis, Venerabilis voluit ut Sorores studiosam operam in infirmorum, carceribus addictarum iuencularum in culpas lapsarum aut periclitantium, hospitalium, orphanotrophiorum, senum in hospitiis receptorum curam impenderent, nullis aliis caritatis erga proximum officiis exclusis, Christum ipsum in his miseris inspiciendo. Per solidos quadraginta duos annos Venerabilis Institutum tam pie sapienterque est moderata, ut uberrimos laetissimosque fructus Deo offerre valuerit. Gregorius XVI P. M. a. 1845 Congregationem, Pius autem IX a. 1851 Constitutiones approbaverunt: Deus vero incrementum mirifice dedit, plures enim per orbem constitutae domus, pluraque puellarum millia Venerabilis Mariae Teresiae spiritum ad nostra usque tempora hauserunt. Plura quoque orphanotrophia, hospitalia, refugia atque gerontocomia optimi huius Instituti tum temporalibus, cum spiritualibus beneficiis sive Venerabilis ipsius, sive suarum filiarum opera, abunde sunt fruita.

Si caritatem non habuero nihil sum, dicit Apostolus (1 Cor. xiii, 2): hoc documento instituta Maria Teresia, animo reputans se nihil esse, insimulque omnia se posse in Eo, qui unus confortare valet, sibi diffidens, et Ei unice confidens, virtutes omnes impigre per totam vitam supra communem piorum modum excoluit, caritatem praesertim, quae harum corona est. *Innixa* itaque *super dilectum suum* (Cant. viii, 5) adversa quaeque omnigenasque aerumnas fortiter superavit, dicere solita: "Omnes contra nos sunt, ergo felicem nanciscemur eventum."

Tot tantisque cumulata meritis, Ecclesiae sacramentis roborata, amoris actum, ut optaverat, erga Deum eliciens, Leodii die 7 Ianuarii a. 1876, prima feria sexta, lectissimam animam exhalavit.

Sanctitatis fama, qua, dum adhuc viveret, Maria Teresia fruebatur, post eius mortem non deferbuit, eo vel magis, quod eius interventione plures

gratiae, si non, vera miracula, a Deo patratae ferebantur. Quare in Leodiensi Curia annis 1902-1905 Ordinaria auctoritate super sanctitatis fama, super scriptis eiusdem Venerabilis, atque super obedientia decretis Urbani Papae VIII, cultum Servis Dei prohibentibus, constructi fuere. Pius Pp. X, fel. rec., Commissiones Introductionis Causae sua manu die 13 Decembris mensis a. 1911 obsignavit. Apostolica auctoritate inquisitionibus Leodii peractis, servatisque de iure servandis, die 1 Iunii mensis anno 1937 coram Rmo Cardinali Raphaële Carolo Rossi, Causae Ponente seu Relatore, Anteparaeparatoria Congregatio super virtutibus habita est, quam die 30 Maii anni 1939 Paraeparatoria est subsequuta: die vero 10 Decembris elapsi anni Generalia comitia coram Ssmo D. N. Pio Papa XII coadunata sunt, in quibus idem Cardinalis Relator dubium proposuit discutiendum: *An constet de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe, Caritate tum in Deum, cum in proximum, nec non de cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia, Fortitudine earumque adnexis in gradu heroico, in casu et ad affectum de quo agitur.* Omnes, quotquot aderant, Rmi Cardinales, Officiales Praelati Patresque Consultores suam quisque edidit sententiam, quam Beatissimus Pater benigne excepit: Suam autem, tempore Sibi bene viso, edere distulit: ingeminandas interim preces hortatus, ut Sua mens maiori divino illustraretur lumine.

Hodiernam vero diem Dominicam Septuagesimae, 9 Februarii, elegit ut Suam panderet mentem. Eapropter Rmos Cardinales Carolum Salotti Episcopum Praenestinum, S. R. C. Praefectum atque Raphaëlem Carolum Rossi, Causae Relatorem, nec non R. P. Salvatorem Natucci meque infra-scriptum Secretarium ad Se arcessivit, divinaque Hostia piissime litata, edixit: *Constare de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe, Caritate tum in Deum cum in proximum; nec non de cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia, Fortitudine earumque adnexis Venerabilis Servae Dei Mariae Teresiae Haze in gradu heroico, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur.*

Hoc autem decretum publici iuris fieri et in acta Sacrae Rituum Congregationis referri mandavit.

Datum Romae, die 9 Februarii a. D. 1941.

✠ C. Card. SALOTTI, Episc. Praen., Praefectus.

(iii) EPISTULA

Ad Illmos Viros Praesidem Ceterosque e Supremo Consilio Foederali Helvetico: DCL Anno Exeunte ab Helvetica Confoederatione Condita (A.A.S., 1941, XXXIII, p. 386).

PIUS PP. XII

Illustrissimi viri, salutem.—Nuper agnovimus Helveticam Confoederationem, Augusto mense proximo ineunte, sescentimum quinquagessimum fauste esse celebraturam annum, ex quo auspicato condita est.

Libentissimo quidem animo Nosmet Ipsi laetitiam participamus dilectae istius Helvetiae, ex qua delecta civium cohors, constanti non modo, sed heroica interdum fidelitate, Romani Pontificis personae tot iam saecula invigilat. Vestra sane Civitas, Illustrissimi Viri, in multiplici linguarum institutionumque varietate, pulcherrimum praebebat intimae ac domesticae coniunctionis exemplum, quod, providente Deo, ceteros quoque populos ad mutuam dilectionem et conciliationem vehementer invitare potest. In summo profecto honore apud vestrates est christiana caritas, quae quidem facit, ut istiusmodi respublica, nemini infensa, ceterarum etiam gentium civibus auxiliari contendat, iis praesertim, qui infandi belli calamitates magis persenserint. Nos igitur etiam atque etiam vobis gratulamur, ac divinae Bonitati, quae vos hucusque peculiari ratione protegit, gratias agimus vobiscum atque habemus. Gratulationes quoque Nostras vobis, Illustrissimi Viri, publice exhibemus, de pace et concordia, quae, bonae voluntatis hominum gratia, in vestris pagis hodie dominantur: de sapientia atque industria, quibus ipsi, inter tot rerum discrimina, populo isti moderamini, in idque contenditis ut—quod est caput quodque Nobis maxime est cordi—religionis iura et officia sarta tecta conserventur. Illud praeterea memorare Nobis placet, quod Helvetici ipsi Magistratus Dei nomen cum fiducia ac reverentia in orationibus suis publicis proferre non omittant et, perhonorificum morem secuti, quoties publica nuntia edicant, se suosque cives tutelae divinae semper commendent. Ita vos plane vestigiis inhaeritis maiorum vestrorum, qui, ineunte Augusto mense anni MCCXCI, foedus inter se perpetuum “in nomine Domini” renovarunt. Hoc autem ominantes, ut cives vestri idem cum Beato Nicolao de Flue sentiant atque operentur, qui et christianae pietatis ardore et Confoederationis Helveticae studio excelluit, fervidis votis gentem vestram prosequimur, ut regnum Christi in eius filiis magis magisque constabiliatur, ut, omnigena prosperitate adaucta, munus sibi divinitus adsignatum melius in dies perficere queat. Denique, sollemni hac conditae Confoederationis memoria, Deum instanti prece efflagitamus, ut praeclaram Helvetiam iugiter tueatur, omnia mala et pericula ab eadem avertat, eiusque Moderatores populumque universum caelestibus bonis affatim ditare benigne velit.

Datum Romae apud Sanctum Petrum, die XII mensis Iulii, anno MDCCCXXXI, Pontificatus Nostri tertio.

PIUS PP. XII

Blessed Nicholas of Flue (1417–1487), Swiss patriot and hermit, defended the Swiss federation against Austria, and to the end of his life assisted his country by counsel and negotiation. A married man with ten children, he obtained his wife's consent to live as a hermit during the latter years of his life near Sachseln in his native canton of Obwalden. He was beatified in 1669 and a movement is on foot at the moment to secure his canonization.

E. J. M.

THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CHURCH DOOR

FROM time to time our weeklies publish letters from persons who complain of the unsociable reserve which, as newcomers, they experience on the part of both priests and people of the parish. The experienced ones amongst us immediately suspect that the fault lies with the complainants.

A normal Catholic, a person of good sense and goodwill, can soon find friends in a new parish. He has only to make himself known to the clergy and to associate himself with the spiritual and social activities. Newcomers do not always appreciate the unpalatable truth that being strangers they cannot expect the clergy to place them immediately into intimate and friendly contact with old and tried parishioners. Ordinary prudence dictates that the priest should exercise discernment of spirits before making introductions. Letters of recommendation from one parish priest to another may be useful in particular cases, but an attempt to make the practice general would lead to endless complications and result in a kind of ecclesiastical passport service.

It is a priest's duty to keep in touch with his parishioners. The most frequently advocated method is that of systematic visiting. But this can be overdone. There is a tendency to exaggerate it as though it were an end in itself. The late Holy Father, Pius XI, in his great encyclical on the priesthood, has urged the necessity of study in the life of the modern priest. One who tires himself out by daily chasing from house to house has slight inclination for reflection and serious reading during the few hours which he spends at home, and through lack of freshness in thinking his sermons will degenerate into collections of oft-repeated platitudes. The ministry of the word shares the supreme sacredness of the administration of the Sacraments and is not to be compared with the service of front doors.

Visiting, then, has its value, but it is far from being the foremost of priestly activities. What has been called the Apostolate of the Church Door is neither more nor less important, but rather a supplement and an extension of the principle of visiting. It is an easy way of getting to know one's people; it enables one to keep in touch with those persons—a considerable proportion in every parish—who for various reasons cannot conveniently be visited in their homes; it gives an opportunity to newcomers, if they desire it, to make themselves known. The priest who stands at his church door Sunday after Sunday, before or after every service, saluting all-comers with a smile and a nod and an occasional kindly word, does more good than he will ever be able to estimate.

But the good work is not without pitfalls for the unwary. Parish bores who want to engage in long conversations and those thoughtless ones who try to seize the opportunity for such weekday affairs as the signing of papers, put a great strain on patience and tact. On the other hand, it is hard to withstand the inclination to spend much time chatting with those whom we prefer. The golden rule is to make an even distribution of our favours.

J. P. R.

PERMISSU SUPERIORUM